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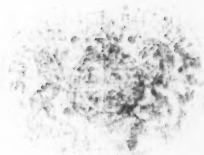
Entituled in Latine,
GESTA ROMANORUM.

Discourſing of ſundry Examples, for the advancement of Vertue, and the abandoning of Vice.

*Very pleaſant in reading, and profitable
in praſtiſe.*



G L A S G O W,
Printed by ROBERT SANDERS, One of His
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THE
HISTORY
OF
GESTA ROMANORUM.

THE ARGUMENT.

Mans soul is dearly beloved of God her Father : And yet for sundry good graces she is tempted by the Devil by three diverse means, at three several ages in this mortal life. If she resist and overcome the same, she is hereby adopted to the fruition of the Matrimonial joy in Heaven, with Christ the Son of God.

The First History.

Sometimes there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, which had a fair creature to his daughter, named Atalanta, whom diverse great Lords, and many noble Knights desired to have to wife. This Atalanta was wondrous swift of foot : wherefore such a Law was made, that no man should have her to wife, except he could over-run her, and take her by swiftness of feet. It befell that many came to run with her, but could not overtake her. At last there came a Knight, named Demetrius, unto her father, and said to him : My Lord, if it please you to give me your daughter to wife, I will run with her. Then said her father, There is a Law made, that whosoever will have her to wife, must run with her : And if he overtake her not, he shall lose his head : and if he overtake her, then shall I wed her unto him.

And when the Emperor had told him all the peril that might fall in the winning of her, the Knight voluntarily granted for to abide that jeopardy. Then the Knight provided him three balls of gold against the running. And when they had begun to run a little space, the young Lady over-run him : Then the Knight threw forth before her the first ball of gold, and when the Damsel saw the ball, she stopped and took it up, and in the mean while the Knight got before her, but that availed little, for when she perceived it, she ran so fast, that in short space she got before him again : and then

then he threwo forth the second ball of gold, and she stooped as before and took it up, and in that while the Knight got before her again : which this young Damsel seeing, constrained her self, and ran so fast, that she won him at an advantage again, and was a fore him again : Now by that time they were nigh the mark where they should abide, wherefore the Knight threwo forth the third ball before her, and she stooped down to take up the ball : And while she was taking up the third ball, the Knight got before her, and was first at the mark. And thus was she won.

The Moral.

By this Emperor is understood the Father of Heaven, and by the Damsel is understood the soul of man, with whom many Devils desire to run, and to deceive her through their tentations, but she withstandeth them mightily, and overcometh them : And when he hath done his worst, and may not speed, then makes he three balls of gold, and casteth them before her in the three ages of man ; that is to say, in Youth, in Man-hood, and in Old age. In youth the Devil casteth the ball of lechery before her ; that is to say, the desire of the flesh : nevertheless, for all this ball, oftentimes man overcometh the Devil, by acknowledging of his sin to God by hearty repentance, and an amendement of life. The second ball, is the ball of pride, the which the Devil casteth to man in his man-hood ; that is to say, in his middle age : but this ball man oftentimes overcometh, as he did the first : but let him beware of the third ball, which is covetousness, that the Devil casteth to man in his old age, which is dreadful : for except a man may overcome this ball, with the other two he shall lose his honor ; that is to say, the Kingdom of Heaven. For when a man burneth in covetousness, he thinketh not on ghostly riches (for ever his heart is set on worldly goods) and reckoneth not of prayers, nor of well-doing, and thus loseth he his heritage, to the which God hath bought him with his precious Blood : Unto the which our Lord Jesus bring us all.

THE ARGUMENT.

As God alloteth diverse men, diverse callings and estates of living in this World, so is every man tryed by the rule of life and doctrine, whether his practise agree with his profession, in profiting himself, without prejudice to others, wherein if he so hold himself content, for such a son the heavenly Father hath planted a tree of heavenly treasure in the life that shall be everlasting.

The

The Second History.

There reigned sometime in Rome a wise and mighty Emperour, named Anselm, who did bear in his arms a shield of silver, with five red Roses. This Emperour had three sons, whom he loved much. He had also continual war with the King of Egypt, in which war he lost all his temporal goods, except a precious Tree. It fortun'd after on a day, that he gave battel to the same King of Egypt, wherein he was grievously wounded, nevertheless he obtained the victory, notwithstanding he had his deadly wound : wherefore while he lay at point of death, He called unto him his eldest son, and said : My dear and well-beloved son, all my temporal riches are spent, and almost nothing is left me, but a precious Tree, the which standeth in the midst of mine Empire : I give to thee all that is under the earth, and above the earth, of the same Tree. O my reverend Father, quoth he, I thank you much.

Then said the Emperour : Call to me my second son. Anon the eldest son greatly joying of his fathers gift, called in his brother : and when he came the Emperour said : My dear son, I may not make my Testament, for as much as I have spent all my goods, except a Tree which standeth in the midst of mine Empire : of the which Tree, I bequeath to thee all that is great and small, Then answered he, and said : My reverend Father, I thank you much. Then said the Emperour, Call to me my third son : and so it was done. And when he was come, the Emperour said : My dear son, I must die of these wounds, and I have only a precious Tree, of which I have given thy brethren their portion, and to thee I bequeath thy portion, for I will that thou have of the said Tree all that is wet and dry. Then said his son : Father, I thank you. Soon after the Emperour had made this bequest, he died. And shortly after, the eldest son took possession of the Tree. Now when the second son heard this, he came to him, saying : My brother, by what law or title occupy you this Tree ? Dear brother, quoth he, I occupy it by this title, my father gave me all that is under the earth, and above of the said Tree : by reason therefore the Tree is mine. Unknowing to thee, quoth the second brother, he gave unto me all that is great and small of the said Tree, and therefore I have as great right in the said Tree as you. This hearing the third son, he came to them, and said : My well-beloved brethren, it behoveth you not to strive for this Tree, for I have as much right in this Tree as you : for by the Law ye tooke the last will and Testament ought to stand : for of a truth he gave me of the said Tree, all that is wet and dry, and therefore the Tree is mine. But for as much as your words are of great force, and mine also, my counsel is, that we be judged by reason : for it is not good nor commendable that strife or dissention should be among us. Here beside dwelleth a King full of reason, therefore to avoid strife,

let us go to him, and each of us lay his right before him : and as he shall iudge, let us stand to his iudgement. Then said his brethren, Thy counsell is good : Wherefore they went all three unto the King of reason, and each of them severally shewed forth this right unto him, as is said before.

When the King had heard the titles, he rehearsed them all again severally : first, saying to the eldest son thus : You say, quoth the King, that your father gave you all that is under the earth, and above the earth, of the said Tree. And to the second brother he bequeathed all that is great and small of that Tree. And to the third brother he gave all that was wet and dry.

And with that he laid the Law to them, and said, That his will ought to stand.

Now my dear Friends, briefly I satisfy all your requests : and when he had thus said, he turned unto the eldest brother, saying, My dear friend, if you list to abide the iudgement of right, it behoveth you to be letten blood on the right arm. My Lord, quoth he, your will shall be done. Then the King called for a discreet Physician, commanding him to let him blood.

When the eldest son was thus letten blood, the King said unto them all three : My dear friends, where is your father buried ? Then answered they, and said : Forsooth, my Lord, in such a place. Anon the King commanded to dig in the ground for the body, and to take a bone out of his breast, and to bury the body again : and so it was done. And when the bone was taken out, the King commanded that it should be laid in the blood of the eldest brother, and it should be till it had received kindly the blood, and then to be laid in the Sun and dried, and after that it should be washt with clear water. His servants fulfilled all that he had commanded : and when they began to wash, the blood vanished clean away. When the King saw this, he said to the second son : It behoveth that thou be letten blood, as thy brother was. Then said he, My Lord, your will shall be fulfilled. And anon he was done unto like as his brother was in all thing. And when they began to wash the bones, the blood vanished away. Then said the King to the third son : It behoveth thee to be letten blood likewise. He answered, and said : My Lord, it pleaseth me well so to be. When the youngest brother was letten blood, and done unto, in all things as his brethren were before, then the Kings servants began to wash the bone, but neither for washing nor rubbing might they do away the blood of the bone, but it ever appeared bloody. When the King saw this, he said : It appeareth openly now that this blood is of the nature of the bone : thou art his true son, and these other two be Bastards : I iudge thee the Tree for evermore.

The Moral.

Dear Friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which bare a shield of silver with fyve red roses ; that

is, his body, that was so fair so clear, and more radiant then any silver, according to the Psalmist : *Speciosus forma præ filiis hominum* ; that is, he was more fair of shape then all the children of men. By these five roses, we understand his five wounds which he suffered for mankind, And by the King of Egypt, we understand the Devil, against whom he fought all the time of his life, and at the last he was slain for mankind. Nevertheless before his death he made his testament to his three sons.

By the first, to whom he gave of the Tree all that was under the earth, and above the earth, we understand such mighty men, and others of all estates in this world, as are not content with their callings, seek ambitiously the subversion of others, to magnify and exalt themselves. By the second son, to whom he gave all of the Tree that was great and small, we understand such worldly wise men in this World, which in their subtilty attempt to win or lose all. By the third son, to whom he gave all that was wet and dry of the Tree, we understand every good Christian Prince, Noble man, Magistrat, or meaner person in every Common-wealth wheresoever, which eshewing all ambition and covetousness, holding himself content with the providence of God, and in his own calling laboreth truly to do good unto all men ; yea, though himself sustain injuries, suffering now solace, then care, now riches, then poverty ; yet receiveth all this thankfully, to have this precious Tree bequeathed thus unto them. This Tree is the Tree of Paradise, that is everlasting joy, which is given to us all, if we take it thankfully. This every man obtaineth not, therefore it behoveth them to go to the King of reason ; that is, unto the Father of Heaven who knoweth all things. The first son was let blood, and in his blood the bone was laid. By this bone we shall understand our strong faith in Christ's merits, and by the lively and fruitfull sap of good works proceeding out of the same, which are rare things to be found in those that seek their own private gain, who when they are let blood by the sharp Lance of GODS Justice, and it be established with divine predication, and made dry with the Sun of outward profession, yet being washt with the water of swelling pride, malice, envy, and such like ; then the faith in Christs merits is as though we had not received it, and the lively and fruitfull sap of good works, hath no power to tarry upon it, but vanisheth away.

And

And thus it fareth with these other two, the first and second sons : but the third son, being contrary unto the other in profession and practise of life and manners, be he Magistrate or mean person, the bone of such a person will ever be firm of faith in himself, and towards others. From such a mans bone the blood of lively fruits (to himself and all others profitable) will never be washed away with the water of wretchedness ; but the more it is dryed in the Sun of true tryal, the better it is. Such are the true children of God, of whom our Lord speaketh thus : *Ye which have forsaken all things for me ; that is, ye that have forsaken the way of sin, shall receive an hundred times more ; that is, ye shall not only receive the Tree of Paradise, but also the heritage of Heaven.* These other two are Bastards, because what they promised in their Baptism, they wrought all the contrary through their wicked living ; and therefore he that desireth to obtain the joys of Heaven, must abide stedfastly in the profession and practise of good life and manners, and then by Christ he shal obtain the Tree of Paradise. Unto which he bring us, who liveth and reigneth for ever. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

God so loved sinful man, that he sent his only begotten Son to redeem him out of the captivity of the World, to rest with him in the joys of Heaven.

The third History.

IN Rome there dwelt sometimes a Noble Emperour, named Dioclesian, who loved exceedingly the vertue of charity, wherefore he desired greatly to know what fowl loved her young best, to the intent that he might thereby grow to more perfect charity. It fortuned upon a day, that the Emperour rode to a Forrest to take his disport, whereas he found the nest of a great bird (called in Latine Struchio Cameli, in English an Ouridge) with her young, the which young bird the Emperour took with him, and closed her in a vessel of glass. The dam of this little bird followed unto the Emperours Pallace, and flew into the hall where her young one was. But when she saw her young one, and could not come to her nor get her out, she returned again to the Forrest, and abode there three days, and at the last she came again to the Pallace, bearing in her mouth a worm, called Thumare : and when she came where her young one was, she let the worm fall upon the glass : by vertue of which worm, the glass brake, and the young one flew forth with her dam. When the Emperour saw this, he praised much the dam of the bird, which laboured so diligently to deliver her young one.

The

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, which greatly loveth them that live in perfect love and charity. This little bird taken from the Forrest, and closed in the glass, was Adam our fore-father, which was exiled out of Paradise and was put into the glass, that is Hell. This hearing the dame of the bird, that is the Son of God, he descended from Heaven unto the Forrest of the VWorld, and lived there three dayes, bearing with him a worm, that is man-hood, according to the Psalmist, *I am a worm, and no man.* This man was slain amongst the Jews; of whose blood, the vessel eternal was broken, and the bird went out, that is, Adam went forth with his Dame, the Son of God, and flew to Heaven.

THE ARGUMENT.

A clean spirit and undefiled soul is the daughter of God, so dear unto him, that he bestows her not upon the rich man wanting wisdom, but upon the poor man that is wise and liveth in his fear; which if she at any time transgress by frailty of flesh, then seeketh she for recovery of her health by the medicine of amendement of life: such a soul shall be espoused to Christ, and live with him in the World to come everlastingly.

The fourth History.

Sometime reigned in Rome a worthy Emperor & a wise, which had a fair daughter and gracious in the sight of every man: this emperor bethought him on a day, to whom he might give his daughter in marriage, reasoning thus: If I give my daughter to a rich man, and he be a fool, then is she lost: but if I give her to a poor and a wise man, then may he get his living by his wisdom.

There was at that time dwelling in the City of Rome a Philosopher named Socrates, poor, but wise, which came to the Emperor, and said: My Lord, be not displeased, tho I put forth my petition before your Highness. The Emperor said, speak on. Then said Socrates: My Lord, ye have a daughter whom I desire above all things. The emperor answered, and said, my friend, I shall give thee my daughter to wife, on this condition, that if she die in the fellowship, after that she is espoused to thee, thou shalt without doubt lose thy head. Then said Socrates, Upon this condition, I will gladly take her to my wife: The Emperor hearing this, called all the Lords and states of his Empire, and made a great feast at their wedding. And after the feast, Socrates led home his wife to his own house, where they lived in peace and health a long time. But at the last, this Emperors daughter sickened to death almost: When Socrates perceived this, he said

to himself: Alace, and woe is me, what shall I do, and whether shall I flee, if the Emperors daughter that is my wife should die? And for sorrow this Socrates went to a Forrest there beside, and wept bitterly. Then while he thus wept and mourned, there came an aged man having a staff in his hand. And asked him why he mourned? Socrates answered, and said: I espoused the Emperors daughter, upon this condition, that if she die in my fellowship, I should lose my life: now she is sickened to death almost, and I can find no remedy nor help, and therefore I mourn.

Then said the old man: Be of good comfort, for I shall help you, if ye will do as ter my counsel. In this Forrest be three Herbs, if you make a drink of the first for your wife, and of the other two a plaister, and if ye use this medicinal drink and plaister in due time, without doubt ye shall recover her perfect health. Socrates did all that the old man had taught him. And when his wife had used a while that medicinal drink and plaister, within short time she was perfectly whole of all her sickness. And when the Emperor heard that Socrates had so recovered his wife, he promoted him to great honour.

The Moral.

Dear friends, the Emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ, his daughter so fair and so Gracious, is the soul, made to the similitude of God, which is full Glorious in the sight of him and of his Angels, while she is not defiled, but abideth in her own proper cleanness. This soul God would not give it to a rich man, but to a poor: that is, a man that is made of the slime of the earth.

This Socrates is a poor man: for why? every man cometh poor and naked into this World from his mothers belly: and every man takes his soul in wedlock; upon such condition, that if she die in his fellowship by deadly sin, without doubt he shall lose eternal life. Therefore, O thou man, if thy wife sicken through frailty of flesh, unto this sin, do then as Socrates did, go unto the Forrest, that is, the Church of Christ, and thou shalt find there an old man with a staff, that is, a discreet Preacher, which shall minister unto thee these three Herbs: whereof may be confessed the medicine of thy recovery unto health. The first herb is acknowledging of sin: the second is repentance: and the third is newness of life, according to the will of God. If these herbs be used in a plaister, the sinner without doubt shall receive his health, and his soul shall be delivered from sin, and assuredly he shall have everlasting life: Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ.

THE

GESTA ROMANORUM. THE ARGUMENT.

II

Many foolish idiots of the Wyld, who shew in abundance of worldly wealth and pomp, thinking they shall live here always, are laboured unto by the Preachers of Gods Word, and admonished of their momentary felicities, and to prepare themselves in bestowing well their short time here, to enjoy the blessing of everlasting felicity in the World to come.

The fifth History.

Sometimes there reigned in Rome a mighty Emperor, and a wise named Frederick, who had one only son, whom he loved much. This Emperor when he lay at point of death, called unto him his son, and said: Dear son, I have a Ball of gold, which I charge thee, on my blessing, that thou anon after my death shall give to the veriest fool thou canst find. When said his Son: My Lord, without doubt your will shall be fulfilled. Anon, this young Lord, after the death of his father, went and sought many Realms, and found many wretched fools: but because he would perform his fathers will, he sought till he came to a Realm where the Law was such, that every year a new King was chosen, who had the ruling of the Realm for one year only, and at the years end he was deposed, and exiled into an Island, where he finished his life in misery. When the Emperors son came to this Realm, the new King was chosen with great honour. And brought unto his Regal seat with much Dulick, and great reverence. And when the Emperors son saw that, he came unto him, and saluted him reverently, saying: My Lord, so I give you this ball of gold on my fathers behalf. Then said he: I pray thee, tell me the cause why thou givest me this ball? Then answered he, and said: My father charged me on his death-bed, that I should give this ball to the most fool that I could find: wherefore I have sought many Realms, and have found many fools, but a more fool then thou I never found: for it is not unknown to thee, that thou shalt reign but a year, and at the years end thou shalt be exiled into a place, where as thou shalt die a miserable death: wherefore I hold thee for the most fool that ever I found, for as much as for the Lordship of a year, thou wilt so willfully lose thy self: and therefore I give thee this ball. Then said the King: Without doubt thou sayest truly, and therefore while I am now in full power of this Realm, I will send before me great treasure wherewith I may sustain my self from a miserable death, when I am exiled, and put down. And so this was done: and at the years end when he was exiled, he lived there in peace and quietness, and afterwards died a good death.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, the which bequeathed the ball, that is worldly riches to fools and

idiots, who savour nothing but that is earthly. This Emperours son is a Preacher or discreet Minister, that travelleth about to many Realms and Lands, to show unbeli-ving men and fools their peril. The Realm wherein no King might reign but a year, is the World: for whoso liveth an hundred years, when he dieth, he shall seem to have lived the spice of one year; therefore do as the King did while ye be yet in the power of life, send before you your treasure; that is, firm faith in Christs merits; and the fruits of Gods Word proceeding from the same; then certainly, when we be exiled out of this World, we shall live in peace, and shall find the mercy of GOD plentifully, whereby we shall obtain eternal life. Unto which bring us, he that for us shed his precious blood.

THE ARGUMENT.

The evil-disposed men of this World, are here advertised of their greedy gripping after the sweet temptations of the Devil, wherein such do rejoyce, till death cometh suddenly upon them, and then they fall into the horrible pit of desolate darkness due to their deserts.

The sixth History.

Dioctesian reigned in the City of Rome, in whose Empire dwelt a noble Philosopher, who by Art set up an Image in the midst of the City of Rome: which Image stretched out his arm and his foremost finger, whereupon stood this Polye written in Latine: (Percute hic:) Strike here. This Image after the death of the Philosopher, stood a long time, and many great Clarks came to read the superscription that was on the finger, but none understood it: wherefore the people wondered much. At last, a long time after, there came a strange Clark out of a far Countrey, and when he saw the Image, he read the superscription, Strike here. And then upon a day when he saw the shadow of the hand, he took a mattock and broke up the ground under the hand where the shadow was, according to the understanding of the superscription, and anon he found an Houle all of Marble underneath the ground, wherein he found so much riches, so many jewels, and so great marvels as he never saw before. And at last he saw a table ready covered, and all manner of things necessary thereto set thereupon. He further beheld, and saw a Carbuncle into the Hall that lighted all the house; and against this Carbuncle one the other side, stood a man holding a bow in his hand, and an arrow ready to shoot. The Clark marvelled much when he saw all these things, and thought with himself, if that I tell this forth, there will no man believe me, and therefore I will have somewhat of these goods in token thereof. And with that he lay a knife of gold upon the table, the which he took, and would have

put

put in his bosome, but then the Archer smote the Carbuncle, and brake it, whereby the whole house was shadowed and made dark : and when the Clark perceived it, he wept bitterly, for he knew no way to get out, for as much as the house was made dark through the breaking of the Carbuncle. And that daraneis abode there for ever after. And so smiteth the Clark his life there in that daraneis.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Image thus standing betokens the Devil, which saith evermore, *Strike here* ; that is, seek after worldly riches, and not for heavenly treasure. This Clark that digged with the mattock, doth betoken the worldly wise-men of this World, as evil disposed pleaders of the Law, crafty Attorneys, and other wicked worldlings that be ever smiting, what by right, and what by wrong, so that they may get the vanities of the World : and in their smiting they find great wonders ; that is, they find therein the delights of this World, wherein many men rejoyce. The Carbuncle that giveth light, is the youth of man, which giveth hardiness to take their pleasure in worldly riches. The Archer with his arrow, is Death, which layes watch against man to slay him. The Clark that took up the knife, betokeneth every worldly man that coveteth ever to have all things at his will, till death smiteth the Carbuncle ; that is, the youth, strength, and power of man, and then lyeth he wrapped in the darkness of sin, in which darkness oftentimes he dieth. Therefore study we to flee the World, and her vain delights, and then we shal be sure to win everlasting life : unto which Christ Jesus bring us all. Amen.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

We are here generally put in mind, that the Devil besieging the World, our Champion Christ Jesus is ready to take our quarrel into his own hand : who descending and saving us from the invasion, and circumvention of Satan, is yet accused for us as a transgressor, and is content to suffer death for our full justification.

The seventh History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor, named Titus, who ordained in his days such a Law, that what knight died in his Empire, should be buried in his armor : and whosoever presumed to spoile any Knight of his Armour after he was dead, should die without any gaw-laying. It befell after few years, that a City of the Empire was besieged of the Emperors enemies, and was in danger of losing, for none that were in the City could defend themselves by any manner of policy : wherefore great sorrows and

and lamentation was made throughout the City.

But at last, within few days, there came to the City a young knight, well favored, and valiant in feats of arms, whom the worthy men of the City beholding, and understanding his prowess, cried to him with one voice: O thou most noble knight, we beseech thee to help us now at our most need, for you may see this City is like to be lost. Then he answered, and said, Sirs, ye see I have no armour, but if I had, I would defend your City.

This hearing a mighty man of the City, he said to him secretly: Sir, here lived sometime a valiant Knight, who now is dead and buried within the City: and if it please you to take his armour ye may defend this City, and deliver us from peril, and that will be honour unto you, and profit unto the City.

The young knight hearing this, went to the grave, and arrayed himself with the armour: and after much fight, obtained the victory, and delivered the City. Which done, he laid the armour again in the grave. But there were some men of the City who envied him, because he had obtained the victory, and accused him to the Judge, saying thus: Sir, a Law was made by the Emperor, that whosoever dispoiled any dead knight of his armour, should die. This young knight found a dead knight, and took away his armour: therefore, I beseech thee, that thou proceed in the Law against him with equity and justice, in giving him severe punishment for so offending the Law. When the Judge heard this, he made the knight to be taken: and when he was examined of this his trespass against the Law, he said thus: Sir, it is written in the Law, that of two harms the least is to be chosen. It is not unknown to you that the City was in peril to be lost, and had I not taken this armor, I had neither saved you, nor this City: therefore me thinks you ought rather to honour me for this good deed that I have done, then thus shamefully to reprove me; for I am led as he that is ready to be hanged. Alas, good Sir, another thing I may alledge for mine excuse: he that stealeth or robbeth violently, purposeth not to restore the thing which he stealeth: but it is not thus with me, for though I took the armour of the dead knight for your defence and safeguard, when I had obtained the victory, I bare it again to the same place, and to the dead knight, whose it is by the Law.

Then said the Justice, A thief that breaketh a house, that he may steal and bear away such as he can find, although he bring again that he hath taken, I ask of thee, if that the breaking of the house be lawful, or not? The knight answered: Sometime the breaking of a house may be good, whereas it is made in a feeble place, which would cause the Master of the house to make his wall stronger, that the Thieves after break not by force the walls so lightly, for avoiding of more harm.

Then said the Judge, If the breaking of the house be good, nevertheless in that breaking, violence is done to the Lord of the house.

And

And so though thou didst restore the armour of the dead Knight
nevertheless thou didst wrong the dead knight in taking away of
his armour. The knight said : I have told you that of two harms
the least is to be chosen, and that harm where-through great good-
ness cometh, ought not to be called harm, but it should rather be
called good. For if an house within the City were on fire, and be-
gan to burn, it were better that three or four houses thereby should
be thrown to the ground, then that they should be set on fire also,
whereby all the City should be burned : right so it the armour of
the dead knight had not been taken, the City had been lost.

And when the Judge heard that he answered so well, and so
reasonably, he could give no judgement against him. But they
who had accused this knight, slew him : for whose death there was
great weeping throughout all the City, and his body was honour-
ably buried in a new Tomb.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, and
this City is the World, which is besieged of the Devil and
deadly sin, and as many as were within the City were all in
peril to be lost. This young Knight that came to the City, is
our Lord Jesus Christ, who had not the armour of Humanity
till he went to the grave, that is the womb of the glorious
Virgin Mary, by the Annunciation of the Angel, saying : *The
holy Ghost shall light on thee, &c. Lo, thou shalt conceive, and
bear a Son.* And thus in the womb of the Virgin he took the
armour of the dead Knight, that is the man-hood of Adam our
fore-father, and saved the City, that is, the World and mankind,
by his blessed Passion that he suffered on the Cross : and put
the armour again into the grave, when his blessed Body was
buried, but the Citizens envied him, that is, the Jews accused
him to Pilate, saying : *If thou suffer him thus, thou art not Cæsars
friend : We have a Law, and after the Law he ought to die,*
John 19. 12. And thus our Lord Jesus Christ of his enemies
was condemned to the death of the Cross, and after ascended
up to Heaven, whether he bring us all. Amen.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

*The fornication of wicked worldly men is here detected. By the
Providence of God and by his gracious favour, the sinner is delivered
out of the thraldom of sin, unto the liberty of life everlasting.*

The eight History.

There reigned sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, and a
wife, named Berold, who ordained a Law, that what woman
was taken in adultery, her husband being alive, she should be cast
into

into perpetual prison. There was that time a Knight that had a fair Lady to his wife, who committed adultery, her husband being alive, and was with child, therefore by the Law she was put in prison, where in short time she was delivered of a fair son. The child grew up till he was seven years old, and his mother daily wept bitterly: which when the child heard, he said to her: O mother, why weepest thou thus? And for what cause are you thus perplexed? Then said his mother: O my sweet son, I have great cause to mourn and thou also, for above our heads are people walking, and the Sun shineth in clearness, and we be here continually in such darknels, that I can neither see thee, nor thou me: Alace, that ever I conceived thee. Then said the son, such joy as you speak of, I never saw, for I was born here in this darknels: therefore if I had meat and drink enough, I would live here all my life: Therefore, mother, weep not, but be chearful. This lamentation that was between the mother and the son, the Emperors Steward heard that stood above their heads, whereof he had great compulsion, and went to the Emperor, and kneeling, besought him of his Grace, that the mother and the son might be delivered out of prison. The Emperor as a merciful Lord, granted that they should be delivered: nevertheless if they trespassed so in time to come, they should be punished with double pain. And after she was delivered, she lived joyfully.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, that made this Law, that what married woman; that is, what soul that is espoused to the Lord, and doth commit adultery; that is, doth worship strange gods, should be cast into the prison of Hell; therefore the sinfull soul hath great cause to weep, for she is debarred from light: that is, from the joys of Heaven. Her son that desired meat and drink, are the wealthy wicked worldlings, that say to the Preachers that preach unto them the joys of Heaven, that while we may live, and have all the solace of the world, we desire no other Heaven. The Steward that heard their lamentation, is the Lord Jesus, who knowing all the privities of our sorrowful and repentant hearts for our sins, besought the Father of Heaven for us, that we might be delivered from the prison of sin, and so come to everlasting life: Unto which he bring us all. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Christ proclaimeb the joyful Feast of Heaven, whereto the lame; that is, the poor Preachers of the Gospel, having their sight, or knowledge in Gods Word, supported by the blind Laity; and each mutually comforting other, they approach unto the proclaimed Feast of perpetual felicity.

The

The ninth History.

Sometime in Rome dwelt an Emperour, named Pompey, who above all other things was merciful. This Emperour proclaimed throughout all his Empire a great Feast, and that poor and rich should come to the feast: and whosoever came to that feast, should not only be well fed, but also he should have great gifts.

When the Herald had warned all manner of men to come to this feast, at that time there were two poor men lying by the way, the one being lame, and the other blind. Alace, said the one of these men to the other, we to us both: how shall we do? For the Emperour hath proclaimed a feast, and whosoever cometh thither, shall not only be well fed, but also shall have great gifts; and I am blind, and thou art lame: how shall we do? Then said the lame man to the blind man: I shall give thee good counsel, if thou wilt do after me: I am lame and feeble, and may not go, nevertheless I can see, and thou art blind, but strong: take thou me upon thy back, and bear me, and I shall direct the right way, and thus we shall both come to the Emperours feast. Then said the blind man: Let it be so: get thou on my back, and I shall bear thee, and guide thou me. And so they did, and came both to the feast, and received great rewards, and after ended their lives in peace.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is our Savior Jesus Christ that proclaimeth a feast; that is, the joyes of Heaven: unto the which joys he calleth all mankind, and forsaketh no man that will come unto him. This lame man betokeneth the poor Ministers of the Gospel, which wanting worldly wealth, live by the Providence of God. And this blind man betokeneth the Lay-men, who know not the right way to Heaven. It behoveth the blind man; that is, the Lay-men, to bear the lame man; that is, the Ministers of the Gospel, sustaining and feeding them with the duties of the Church: and the Ministers in Gods cause are bound to teach and to inform us in the way to Heaven; whereas we shall not only have a feast, but also great reward and joy. Unto which God bring us all. Amen.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

Heaven and Hell are here compared to two Cities: to these Cities are two contrary wayes. To Heaven (which is the City of all heavenly treasure and felicity) is a narrow crooked, craizy, and painful way, having three enemies, the Devil, the World, and the Flesh. To Hell (being the City, or sink of sorrow and sadnes) a fair way, broad, plain, and easy, having three guides; that is, pride of life, covetousness of the eyes, and concupiscence of the flesh.

The tenth History.

Sometime in Rome dwelt an Emperor, named Solliculus, who was very wise and merciful in all his works. This Emperor builded in the east a noble City, wherein he put all his treasure to be kept. Unto this City the way was stony, full of hambles and sharp thorns, and three Knights were armed ready to fight with them that would come to that City. Therefore the Emperor ordained, that whosoever overcame these knights, should enter the City and take at his will of the Emperors treasure. After that, this Emperor did make in the north a City, wherein he ordained all manner of pain, sorrow, and tormenting for malefactors, to which was a broad way very delectable, growing full of Roses and fair Lillies, and in their way were three knights, ever waiting if any man came towards the City of the North, to serve him with all manner of delicates and necessary provision. And if it fortuned that any man did enter within that City, the custome was such, that the people would bind him hand and foot, and cast him into prison, there to abide the sentence of the Judge.

When this was cryed throughout all the Empire, there were two knights dwelling in one City, one named Jonathas, who was a wise man, the other called Pirrhus, who was a fool; nevertheless, there had continued between them great love. This Jonathas said to Pirrhus: Dear friend, there is a common cry made throughout all Lands, that the Emperor hath made a City in the east, wherein he hath put his treasure, and whosoever may enter that City, shall take what he will of the treasure, therefore let us go thither. Then said Pirrhus: Thy counsel is good, let us go. The wise knight said: If it be so, that thou wilt follow my counsel, I pray thee that faithful friendship may continue between us; and in token of love, thou shalt drink my blood, and I will drink thine, one this condition, that neither of us leave other in this journey. The foolish knight said: It pleases me right well, wherefore they were both let blood, and each of them drank others blood. When this was done, they went forth together on their journey: and when they had gone three dayes journey toward the City where the treasure was, they came to a place where were two ways, one sharp and stony, and full of thorns, the other fair and plain, and full of delights. Then said the wise knight to his fellow: Dear friend, here are two ways, one sharp and thorny; nevertheless, if we go this way, we shall come to the City that is so rich, and we shall have that we desire. Then said the foolish knight to his fellow: I wonder greatly at you, that you will speak such things, for I will rather believe mine eyes then your words. I see here openly, and so do you, that here is a hard way, and full of thorns: and as I have heard, there be three Champions armed in this way, ready to fight against all men that go towards the City of the east; and therefore I will not go that way: but here is (as you may see) another way, plain, and easy to

to walk in, and in this way there are three knights ready to serve us, and give us all manner of things delightful for us: and therefore by this way will I go, and not by that other way. Then said the wise knight: Certainly, if we go by that way, we shall be led into the City of the North, wherein there is no mercy, but perpetual pain and sorrow, and there we shall be taken and bound, and cast into prison. Certainly, said the foolish knight, this is the ready way; and as I believe, it is more profitable than the other way. When went they both forth the fair way, and anon three knights met with them, which received them courteously for one night, & gave them all manner of things & were pleasant to them. And on & morrow they took their journey forth toward the City: and when they were within the City, anon the Emperors Officers met with them, and said: Friends, why came ye hither, in so much that ye knewe the Law of this City is so cruel, of long time heretofore: surely ye that be served after the Law. Anon they took the wise knight, and brought him, and put him into prison: and after that, they took the foolish knight, and bound him fast, and cast him into a ditch. Soon after it befell that the Judge came to the City, to give judgement on them that had trespassed the Law; and anon all the prisoners were brought forth before the Judge, among whom these two knights were brought forth, one from prison, and the other from the ditch. Then said the wise knight to the Judge: My reverend Lord, I complain of my fellow that is guilty of my death: for when we two came to the two ways, whereof the one led to the City of the East, and the other to this City, I told him all the peril of this City, and the reward of that other City, but he would not believe me, but said to me on this wise: I will believe mine own eyes better than thy words. And because he was my fellow, I would not let him go alone in this way: and thus came I with him, wherefore he is the cause of my death. Then said the foolish knight: I complain that he is the cause of my death: for it is not unknown to you all, that I am a fool, and he a wise man, and therefore he should not so lightly have followed my folly; for if he had forsaken this way, I should have followed him, and therefore he is the cause of my death. Then said the Judge to the wise knight, because that thou with all thy wisdom, so lightly consentedst and followedst the will of the fool, and his foolish words: and thou fool because thou didst reject the counsel and advice of the wise, and wouldest not believe him: I give judgement, ye both be hanged for your trespass. And so it was done. Wherefore all men praised greatly the Judge for his discreet judgement.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is Almighty GOD, and in the East is the City of Heaven, wherein is treasure infinite, and unto this City is a hard way, and full of thorns: that is, the

way of repentance, by which way full few walk : for it is hard and strait, according to the holy Scripture, saying thus : *Arcta est via quæ ducit ad vitam*. It is a strait way that leadeth to everlasting life. In this way are three armed Knights; that is, the Devil, the World, and the Flesh, with whom it becometh us to fight, and to obtain the Victory, before we may come to Heaven. The second City that is in the North, is Hell : and to this accordeth the Scripture, saying thus : *Ab aquilone ponetur omnia malum* : Out of the North cometh all evil. Certainly to this City the way is plain and broad, and walled about on every side with all manner of delights ; wherefore many men walk by this way. The three Knights that give to every man going this way what thing them pleaseth, are these, pride of life, covetousness of the eyes, and concupiscence of the flesh : in which three the wretched man greatly delighteth, and at the last they lead him to Hell. This witty Knight betokeneth the soul, and the foolish Knight betokeneth the flesh, which is alwayes foolish, and at all times ready to do evil. These two are fellows, and knit in one : for either of them drink others blood ; that is, they shall drink of one cup, either of joy or pain, which they shall have after the day of Doom.

The soul chooseth the way of repentance : and in as much as she may, she stirreth the flesh to do the same. But the flesh never thinketh what shall come after : and therefore she goeth on in the delights of this VWorld, and fleeth the vertue of repentance. And thus the soul after death is cast into Hell, and the flesh is cast into the ditch ; that is, into the grave. But when the Judge cometh ; that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, at the last day, to judge all mankind, then the soul shall complain upon the flesh, and the flesh upon the soul : But when the Judge that cannot be deceived shall condemn the soul, because she followed the frailty of the flesh ; and the flesh, because it would not believe the soul. Wherefore let us study to tame our flesh, that we may obey God, and then we shall have eternal life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

The soul of man being possessed of the princely Territory of Paradise, was by the Devil provoked to sin against her Creator, and for the same transgression (being thence into the wide World exiled) lost that heritage : but by Christs blessed Death and Passion, was restored unto a more happy heritage of everlasting felicity.

The

The eleventh History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, Named Frederick, which had no child, but one only Daughter, to whom the Emperor after his decease, bequeathed all his empire. This understanding an Earl that dwelt there beside, he came to this young Lady, and wooed her, and provoked her to sin all that he might: whereby this young Lady in short process of time, inclined to the Earl, and this Earl anon lay with her, and desired her: and after that he drave her from her heritage, and exiled her out of the empire, wherefore she made great lamentation, and fled into a Realm there beside, where she daily wept and mourned.

It befell after on a day, that while she sat mourning by the high-way side, there came riding by her a fair young Knight, upon a horse, who came towards her a great pace, and very courteously saluted her, asking her the cause why she mourned so sore? Then answered she, and said: My reverend Lord, I am an emperors daughter, descending of Royal blood: my father is dead, who left me all his empire, because he had no other heir. And after his decease an Earl there beside, deceived me, deflowered my virginity, and after that he put me violently out of my heritage, so that now I am fain to beg my bread from door to door, and this is the cause of my sorrow. Then said the knight: Fair Damsel, I have great compassion on thy beauty and thy comeliness: therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I will fight for thee against the Earl, and will assure thee the victory. Then said she: Alace, good Sir, I have nothing that I may give unto you but my self. And I ask no more of thee, said the knight, but that thou wouldest be my wife, and love no man so much as me. Then said she: Reverend Sir, that I will do gladly, and more if I might. Then said the knight: I will that you do nothing for me, but if it fortune me to die in the fight for thee, and obtain the victory, thou shalt take my bloody shirt, and hang it upon a beam in thy chamber: and this thou shalt do for two causes. The first is, that whensoever thou beholdest the shirt, thou shalt weep for me. The second is, that whosoever man come to woo thee to be his wife, thou shalt then hastily run into thy chamber and there beholding my bloody shirt, think heartily within thy self thus:

The Lord of this shirt died for my love in battell, by which he recovered my heritage: God forbid that I should take any other man after his death. Then said she: Reverend Sir, all this I shall fulfill, by the grace of God. And when the knight heard this, he essayed to fight against the said earl, and obtained the victory, and the earl was overcome and fled, and this young Lady was thought, and received again into her heritage. Nevertheless, the knight was deadly wounded in that battel, whereof he died: but ere he died, he bequeathed his bloody shirt unto this Damsel, desiring her to keep her promise. When this young Lady heard of his

his death, the wept sore, for in his shirt was wrought thus.

Think on me, and have in mind,

Him; that to thee was so kind.

Anon when she had received this shirt, she hanged it upon a beam in her chamber: and as oft as she beheld it, she wept bitterly. It befell not long after, that the States of the empire came to her, and desired her to take an husband: but then she went to her chamber, and beheld the bloody shirt, and weared sorrowful, and said oftentimes: *Woe and alace, thou sufferdest death for my love, and thou also recoveredst again my heritage: God forbid, that I should take any other man but thee. And thus she answered every man that came to her: and so they went a way disappointed of their purpose, and she ended her life in rest.*

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is the Father of Heaven, and his Daughter is the soul of man, made to the similitude of God, to whom he gave and bequeathed the Empire of Paradise. But there came the Earl; that is, the Devil, and provoked her to sin, when she eat of the Apple, and said to her thus: *In what hour ye eat of this Apple, ye shal be Gods.* Wherefore we breaking Gods commandment were exiled out of Paradise, to live in this world in great wretchedness, as the Scripture saith: *In the sweet of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread.* But then came a fair young Knight, and a strong; that is, our Lord Jesus Christ, who had compassion upon mankind, and taking upon him our flesh and blood, gave bittel to the Devil, and overcame him: and thus won he again our heritage. Therefore let us do as this young Lady did, let us lay this bloody shirt; that is, the remembrance of the Passion of Christ, on the beam of our hearts, let us think how our Lord Jesus shed his precious blood for us. And if any man; that is, if the Devil, or any other, would stir us to sin, let us think presently on the Passion of Christ, saying thus: I will take none other but thee, who hast shed thy blood for me: And thus shal we win everlasting life. Unto which bring us all the God of glory. Amen.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

We are here generally advertised of honoring the Sabbath day; how, for the redeeming of time, to be occupied in ghostly contemplation, is profitable to the soul and body. Also Preachers of Gods Word oftentimes for saying truth, purchases ill will. If we bestow our talents in the amplifying of Faith, and furthering of one another with good works, we shall then inherit the fruition of eternal life prepared for Christs Elect.

The

The twelfth History.

IN Rome there sometime dwelt a mighty Emperor, named Apolinus, who ordained a Law, that ever man upon pain of death should celebrate the day of his Nativity. This Emperor called to him a Clerk that was heght Virgil, and said: My dear Master, there be many heynous offences done in mine Empire contrary to the Law; therefore, I pray thee, that thou by thy cunning wouldst make some craft, whereby I may know who trespasseth against the Law, privily or openly. Then said Virgil: My reverend Lord, your will shall be done. Anon this Virgil through his craft made an Image in the midst of the City of Rome, which denounced and told the Emperors Messengers who trespassed against the Law, and who not. There was at that time dwelling in the City of Rome a Smith that heght Focus, which by no means would celebrate the Nativity of the Emperor. It befell upon a night as the Smith lay in his bed, he thought upon the Image that accused many men before, dreading lest the Image would accuse him, wherefore he aroise and went to the Image, and said: I make a vow to God, if thou accuse me, I shall brake thy head. And when he had said thus, he went home. The Emperor on the morrow following, sent Messengers to the Image (as before time he was accustomed), to know and understand who had trespassed against the Law. And to them then said the Image: Lift up your eyes, and behold what is in graven in my fore-head. And when they looked up, they said this Poete written: Times be changes, and men become woole and worse. For he that will say the truth, shall have his head broken. Therefore go ye forth to your Lord, and tell him all that ye have heard and seen. The Messengers went forth and told the Emperor all they had heard and seen.

Then said the Emperor: Arm your selves, and go to the Image, and if that you find any man that hath menaced or threatened to hurt the Image, bind him hand and foot, and bring him unto me. Then went the Messengers forth to the Image, and said to it: Tell us the truth, if any man hath threatened thee, and we shall revenge thee anon? Then said the Image: Take the Smith Focus, for he is the man that will not honor the Nativity of the Emperor. Straightway the Messengers led forth the Smith before the Emperor, and there examined him, why he kept not the day of the Emperors Nativity in reverence and honor, according to the Law? Then answered the Smith, and said: Reverend Lord, I beseech you, that you will hear mine excuse: and if I answer not reasonably to all manner of points that ye shall ask me, I will yield me fully to your grace. Then said the Emperor, I will hear thee, and that which is right, that will I do.

Then said the Smith: I must have eight pence every day in the week, and that I cannot get without great labor: and therefore I may not keep that day Holy-day more then other days. Then said

the Emperor: Why must thou have these eight pence? Then said the smith: I am bound to pay dayly two pence, and two pence I lend and two pence I lose, and two pence I spend. Then said the Emperor: Tell me more expressly of these eight pence. Then said the smith: I am bound every day to pay two pence to my Father, for when I was young he spent dayly two pence on me, which I am bound to pay him again for his sustentation; and two pence I lose on my wife. Then said the Emperor: Why lovest thou that two pence on thy wife? Then said he: Wherefore saw ye ever woman but she had one of these properties, either she was willfull, and contrary to her husband, or hot of complexion? And therefore that I give her, I lose. And two pence I lend to my son, wherewith he is sustained, that when I come to age and poverty, he may pay me two pence again, like as I do my father. Also I spend two pence on my self in meat and drink, and that is little enough. Then said the Emperor: Thou hast answered well and wisely. Not long after the Emperor died, and this smith *Focus* was chosen to be Emperor, because he spent his eight pence so wisely, and so profitably: and thus he ended his life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is our blessed Savior Jesus Christ, which ordained by his holy Law, that every man should keep holy the Sabbath day. This *Virgil* that made that Image, is the holy Ghost, who established among us Preachers to teach vertues, and reprove vice, and they should not spare the poor, nor f rich. But now if a Preacher should speak the truth against any man, he shall be threatned by the enemies of Christ; that is, by evil men, that neither love God nor man. Wherefore the Preacher may say now a-dayes, that *Posie* which was written in the fore-head of the Image; *Times be changed from good to evil, and men be dayly worse: for who so would speak the truth now a-dayes, shall have his head broken.* Therefore it is needfull they be armed; that is, Preachers ought to be armed wth vertuous examples of good life, and then they need not fear; because they have the truth of God to stand by them, according to the Apostles saying: *If God be for us, who can be against us?*

By this smith *Focus*, is understood every good Christian man, who dayly should spend his time in redeeming of every hours travel, with some profit corporal or spiritual: and then ought he to be presented before the heavenly Emperor. This *Focus* paid two pence to his father, and so we should pay to our Father of Heaven two pence; that is, honor and love. For when we were the children of wretchedness, and in

bondage,

bondage, Almighty God sent down to the earth his Son to redeem us, according to S. John the Evangelist, saying : *God loved the world so well, that he gave his only begotten Son for the salvation of the world.* Also this *Focus* lent two pence to his son ; that is, every Christian man ought to lend to the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, true and unfeigned faith, and fruitful good works and deeds in our life, and he will repay us again at the day of doom with his heavenly mercy, when soul and body shall be glorified. And that he is our brother, may be proved by that text of *Esay*, saying : *A child is born to us.* This *Focus* lost two pence to his wife: his wife betokeneth the flesh, upon whom thou lovest two pence ; that is, unlawful love, and consent to sin, because the flesh is contrary to the Spirit, and is ever subject to sin. This *Focus* also spent two pence on himself : by the first penny ye shall understand Repentance, wherewith the Angels in Heaven do greatly rejoyce : by the second penny, ye shall understand perfect perseverance and amendment of life: for he that abideth unto the end, shall be saved. And he that spendeth well these two pence, shall obtain everlasting life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Man being blind through sin, and either by infirmity of frail flesh, or suggestion, trespassing with evil and lewd company, though God of his mercy be favorable unto him in his life-time, by reason of the foresaid respect ; yet if he accustomably walk on forward in this worldly wickedness, his willfull blindness shall not excuse him, but accuse him on the day of judgement, most grievously to have offended God, in abusing his mercy offered, and therefore the less worthy to have the reward of the simple soul, that repen-
tantly and with modesty liveth to the fruition of everlasting bliss.

The thirteenth History.

Sometime in Rome dwelt a Noble Emperor, which amongst all other vertues loved best mercy : wherefore he ordained a Law, that every blind man should have an hundred shillings by year of his treasure. It fell on on a day, that certain men came to a Tavern to drink wine, and after that these men had sitten in the Tavern three days, the fourth day they were greatly in debt for the wine : wherefore the Waiter came to them, and demanded money for his wine. Then said one of the drinkers ; Sirs, the Emperor hath made such a Law, that every blind man shall have an hundred shillings of his treasure : therefore let us call lots among

among us, and to whom the lot fallerh, let his eyes be put out, and so may he go the Emperors Palace, and get an hundred shillings to discharge us. Now this counel liked them well, so they cast lots, and the lot fell on him that gave the counel, and his fellows immediately put out his eyes.

And when he was blind, he went to the Emperors Palace, and asked an hundred shillings of the Steward, according to the Emperors decrees. Dear friend, said the Steward: Thou didst see with both thine eyes a while since: thou also understandest the Law amiss: for the Law is made for men that are blind through infirmities, or by the will of God; but the other day thou hadst thy sight in the Tavern, and hast wilfully lost it. Therefore go to the Tavern again to thy fellows, and discharge there what thou owest, for here gettest thou not a farthing. Then went this wretched man forth, and told his fellows of the Stewards answer, and with that came in the Waiter, and dispoiled them of their cloths, and beat them, and thus drove them with shame out of the City: And so they were never after seen there.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is our Savior Christ, who ordained a Law, that every blind man should have an hundred shillings of his treasure. The blind man betokeneth every sinner, who sinneth through infirmity, or the enticing of the Devil, the world, and the flesh, and shall receive an hundred shillings, if he be inwardly repentant of his sins: that is, he shall have an hundred times more joy, according to the Scripture, saying: *Ye shall receive an hundred times more joy, if ye repent and turn from sin, and all ye shall have everlasting life.* These men that came to the Tavern to drink wine, be sinners, who oftentimes come to the Tavern of our adversary the Devil, to drink of his carnall appetits; that is, they there consume and waste away all spiritual vertues, which they received when they received the Sacrament of Baptism, where the devil our enemy, dispoileth them of all their good deeds that ever they have wrought before. They cast lots; that is, they cast among them the custome of sin, and this lot of sin falleth on such as are unthankfull and mercilesse: and such a man willfully becometh blind; that is, he becometh willfully a soul sinner, like Judas, that betrayed our LORD without any suggestion or enticing: and therefore such men sin most grievously. VVhen they come before the Steward; that is, before the Prelats of the Church, they can hardly obtain an assurance of Heaven, because they be not in the right way to leave their sin. Therefore let us study with all

all diligence to please God, that we may obtain everlasting life, which is laid up in store for all those that live modestly, looking for eternal salvation; unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen.

T H E A R G U M E N T .

A certain vow of love being between the soul of every faithful Christian and Jesus Christ, we are to consider the merciful and gracious Covenant of God toward the faithful, and to be careful of this Covenant: and we are to study to perform our vow, so as we at the prefixed day of promise being undisturbed, may thereby purchase the promised place of everlasting glory, prepared for all them that seek the glory of God, and their souls health.

The fourteenth History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Emperor, named Philimins, who had one only daughter, who was fair and gracious in the sight of every man, who had to name Aglaia. There was also in the Emperors Palace a Gentle Knight that loved dearly this Lady. It befell after on a day, that this Knight talked with this Lady, and secretly uttered his desire unto her. Then she said courteously: Seeing you have uttered to me the secrets of your heart, I will likewise for your love utter to you the secrets of my heart: and truly, I say, that above all others, I love you best. Then said the Knight, I purpose to visit the Holy Land; And therefore give me your truth, that this seven years you shall take no other man, but only for my love to tarry for me so long: and if I come not again by this day seven years, then take what man you like best. And likewise I promise you, that within this seven years I will take no wife. Then said she: This covenant pleaseth me well. When this was said, each of them was betrothed to other: and then this Knight took his leave of the Lady, and went to the Holy Land. Shortly after, the Emperor treated with the King of Hungary for the marriage of his Daughter. Then came the King of Hungary to the Emperors Palace to see his Daughter: and when he had seen her, he liked Marvellous well her Beauty and Behaviour, so that the Emperor and the King were accorded in all things as touching the Marriage, upon the condition that the Damself would consent. Then called the Emperor the young Lady to him, and said: O my fair daughter, I have provided for thee that a King shall be thy husband, if thou list to consent: therefore tell me, what answer thou wilt give to this? Then said she to her father: It pleaseth me well: but one thing, dear Father, I intreat of you, If it might please you to grant me, and this it is: I have vowed to keep my Virginity, and not to marry these seven years: therefore, dear father, I beseech you for all the love that is between your gracious father-hood

and me, that ye name no man to be my husband till these seven years be ended, and then I shall be ready in all things to fulfill your will. Then said the Emperour: Sith it is so that thou hast thus vowed, I will not break thy voto: but when these Seven Years be expired, thou shalt have the King of Hungary to thy husband. Then the Emperour sent forth his letters to the King of Hungary, praying him, If it might please him to stay Seven Years for the love of his daughter, and then he should speed without fail. Herewith the King was pleased, and content to stay the prefixed day.

And when the Seven years were ended save a day, the young Lady stood in her Chamber window, and wept sore, saying: Woe and Alace, as to morrow my love promised to be with me again from the Holy Land: and also the King of Hungary to morrow will be here to marry me, according to my fathers promise: and if my Love come not at a certain hour, then am I utterly deceived of the inward love I bear to him.

When the day came, the King hastened toward the Emperour with a great earnestness to marry his daughter, and was Royally arrayed in purple. And while the King was riding on his way, there came a Knight riding by him, to whom he said: Dear friend, whence art thou: and whence comest thou: the Knight answered, and said: I am of the empire of Rome, and now am lately come from the Holy Land, and I am ready to do you the best service I can. And as they rode talking by the way, it began to rain so fast, that all the Kings apparel was sore wet. Then said the Knight: My Lord, ye have done foolishly, for as much as ye have not brought with you your house. Then said the King: Why speakest thou so: My house is large and broad, and made of stones and mortar: How should I then bring with me my house? Thou speakest like a fool. When this was said, they rode on till they came to a great deep water, and the King smote his horse with his spurs, and leapt into the water, so that he was almost drowned. When the Knight saw this, and was over on the other side of the water without peril, he said to the King: Ye were in peril, and therefore ye did foolishly, because ye brought not with you your bridge. Then said the king: Thou speakest strangely, my bridge is made of lime and stone, and containeth in length more then half a mile: how should I then bear with me my bridge? Therefore thou speakest foolishly. Well, said the knight, my foolishness may turn thee to wisdom. When the king had ridden a little further, he asked the Knight: what time of day it was? Then said the knight: If any man hath list to eat, it is time of the day to eat: and therefore, my reverend Lord, I pray, take a Podicum with me, for that is no dishonor to you, but great honor to me before the States of this empire. Then said the King: I will gladly eat with thee. They sat both down in a fair Vine-garden, and there dined together, both the King and the Knight. And when

When dinner was done, and that the King had washed, the knight said to the King: My Lord, ye have done foolishly, for that ye brought not with you your father and mother. Then said the King: What sayest thou? my father is dead, and my mother is old, and may not travel: how should I then bring them with me? Therefore to say the truth, a foolishier man then thou art, did I never hear. Then said the knight: every work is praised at the end.

When the knight had ridden a little further, and was nigh the Emperors Palace, he asked leave to go from him, for he knew a nearer way to the Palace, to the young Lady, that he might come first, and carry her away with him. Then said the king: I pray thee tell me, by what place thou purpoisest to ride? Then said the knight: I shall tell you the truth: this day seven years I left a net in a place, and now I purpose to visit it, and draw it to me: and if it be whole, then will I take it to me, and keep it as a precious jewel: if it be broken, then will I leave it. And when he had thus said, he took his leave of the king, and rode forth; but the king kept the broad high way.

When the emperor heard of the kings coming, he went towards him with a great company, and Royally received him, causing him to shift his wet cloaths, and to put on fresh apparel. And when the Emperor and the King were set at meat, the Emperor welcomed him with all the cheer and solace that he could. And when he had eaten, the Emperor asked tidings of the King: My Lord, said he, I shall tell you what I have heard this day by the way. There came a knight to me, and reverently saluted me: and anon after there fell a great rain, and greatly spoiled my apparel. And anon the knight said: Sir, you have done foolishly, for that you brought not with you your house. Then said the Emperor: What clothing had the knight on? A cloak, said the King. Then said the Emperor, surely that was a wise man, for the house whereof he spake, was a cloak, and therefore he said to you, that you did foolishly, because you came without your cloak; for if you had brought with you a cloak, your cloaths had not been spoiled with rain. Then said the King: when we had ridden a little further, we came to a deep water, and I smote my horse with my spurs, and I was almost drowned, but he ride through the water without any peril. Then said he to me: Ye did foolishly, for that you brought not with you your bridge. Truly, said the Emperor, he saith truth: for he called the bridge your squires that should have ridden before you, and essayed the deepness of the water. Then said the King: We rode further, and at the last he prayed me to dine with him. And when we had dined, he said: I did unwise, because I brought not with me my father and mother. Truly, said the Emperor, he was a wise man, and saith truth: for he called your father and mother, bread and wine, and other victuals. Then said the King: We rode further, and anon after, he asked me leave to

to go from me, and I asked earnestly, whether he went? And he answered again, and said: This day seven years, I left a net in a private place, and now I will ride to see it: and if it be broken and torn, then will I leave it: but if it be as I left it, then shall it be unto me right precious. When the Emperor heard this, he cryed with a loud voyce, and said: O ye my knights and servants, come ye with me speedily unto my Daughters chamber, for surely that is the net of which he spake. And forthwith his knights and servants went unto his Daughters chamber, and found her not; for the fore-said knight had taken her with him. And thus the King was deceived of the Damsel, and he went home again to his own Countrey ashamed.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is our Lord Jesus Christ, and his fair Daughter is everlasting life, which the Emperor had ordained for Kings, Knights, and other men. The Knight that loved this young Lady, is every good Christian soul, which holdeth himself not worthy to come into the sight of God unto such joy, as the Apostle saith: *The sufferings of this time are not worthy to attain to the glory that is to come.* This Knight was seven years absent from his love: like as a good Christian all the dayes of his life, should labour and travel in fulfilling the seven works of mercy. By the King that came without a cloak in the rain, is to be understood some mighty men in this world, which have cloaks to cover all their other cloaths. By this cloak is understood charity, as the Apostle saith: *Charity covereth a multitude of sins*: but many men have not this cloak; wherefore they are wet with the rain of pride, avarice and lechery. This King also was almost drowned, because he lacked his bridge; that is, perfect faith: for as we see that no man may pass over a great water, broad and deep, without a bridge, or some other thing, that is able to bear him: right so, without faith it is impossible to please God: for Christ saith: *If ye have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, then may you say to the hills, Remove out of your places, and they shall remove.* But many of us now a-dayes have very feeble faith, and therefore do suddenly fall into the clay of desperation, and by deadly sins oftentimes offend God. Also this King had not brought with him his father and his mother: by the father, which is cause of generation, is understood humility, without which there is no vertue in any man: and thereto accordeth S. Gregory, saying: *He that gathereth all other vertues without humility, is like a man that casteth dust into the wind.* His mother betokeneth Hope: therefore

therefore he that will obtain everlasting life, must have the cloak of Charity, the bridge of Faith, and a father of Meekness, and a mother of Hope, as the Apostle saith.

Also this Knight, sent the narrow way, and the King the broad way: for he that will be saved, must go a strait way; that is, the way of Abstinence, Alms-deeds, Chastity and Repentance; of the which way speaketh the Apostle: *The way is strait that leadeth unto everlasting life.* But many men go the other way which leadeth to Hell; that is, by the way of fleshly lusts: and such men go out of the way of everlasting life. Therefore study we to walk in the narrow way, that thereby we may obtain everlasting life.

THE ARGUMENT.

By the History is figured, as appeareth in the Moral, the soul of every good Christian held of him as a daughter: but being seduced, carried away, and defiled by Satan her soul enemy, she is reduced by the help and valiant prowess of her heavenly Champion Christ Jesus unto her former habitation. Yet man being ungrateful to his Redeemer, forgetteth his duty, and for good rewardeth evil to his Champion Christ Jesus, delivering him to be judged by the Law as an offender: but when the Champion avoucheth what he hath done for man and his soul, then he is with shame of his ingratitude constrained to remorse, and call for grace to repent and amend his life, that by the death of his Champion Christ, he may obtain eternal life.

The fifteenth History.

Quintus dwelt in Rome a noble Emperor, named Agias, which had retained unto him a knight, named Gerard, which was a toothy warrior, nevertheless he was as meek as a lamb in the Emperors Court; but in the field he was like a Lion. This Emperor had a fair daughter, whom the strong and mighty earl of Pelester carried by force away, and defiled, which more displeased the Emperor, then the carrying of her away. Therefore he called unto him his Counsel, and said: Dear friends, the violence done to me in deflowering of my daughter, is not unknown to you, and therefore I purpose to give battel to the earl: wherefore, I pray you, be ready at a day, that ye may proceed with me in battel. And they said: Sir, we be ready to live and die with you in battel. When the appointed day of battel came, they met on both sides, and a cruel sharp conflict was prosecuted on both sides, and almost all on the Emperors part were slain: and as the Emperor himself was forcibly assailed, the knight Gerard put himself among the enemies before the Emperor, and fought manfully, and so the Emperor

Emperor escaped, and the knight abode and slew the earl, nevertheless the knight had divers wounds, notwithstanding this, he abode still till the blood ran down to his foot: and when the enemies saw that the earl was slain, they fled, and the knight with his people followed on the chase, till they came to the place where the Emperors daughter was, and led her with him. And thus with triumph and victory he returned again to the Emperor. For the which victory, and re-obtaining of the Emperors daughter, he was greatly praised of all the people. Not long after, it befell that this Knight had a sute in the Emperors Court, wherefore the Knight came unto the Emperor, and prayed him meekly to be favorable to his cause: and furthermore desired him to do reason touching his honest demand.

When the Emperor had heard him, he called to him a Judge, and said: Sir, our will is, that you do all Equity unto this Knight. And when the Knight heard this, he cryed with a loud voyce: Alace, alace, who ever heard of such an Emperor? Thou was, said he, in battel, where thy head should have been smitten off: and I in mine own person, and none other man, put my self in jeopardy for thee, & saved thee: and now thou hast assigned another man to be iudge in my cause: alace, that thou was born: and with that word the Knight put off all his cloaths, and shewed the wounds that he had received in the battel, unto all the men that were there present, and said: Lo, what have I suffered for thee, O Emperor: I did put no other man in my stead: and now thou assignest another man in my cause. Soothly, I say to thee, that I never served such a Lord before.

When the Emperor heard this, being almost Confounded in himself, he said: O dear friend, all that thou sayest is truth: thou savedst me from death, thou didst re-obtain my daughter again, and for my sake thou hast suffered many wounds: Merily, it is right that I in mine own person come down and make an end of thy cause, so as may be to thy content, and to mine honor. And then the Emperor labored very busily in his matter, and made thereof an end, according to the Knights request: wherefore all men greatly commended the Emperor.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor may be called every Christian man, or else all mankind, which had a fair daughter; that is to say, the soul made to the similitude of GOD. This Earl betokeneth the Devil, which carrieth away, and desloureth by sin the soul of man, through eating the fruit of the forbidden tree: wherefore all mankind was in thralldom, till a strong and valiant Knight came and put himself on the Cross to suffer death, as a Redeemer of mankind from the Devil. For if that had

had not been, we had all been partakers of thralldom everlastingly : and this Knight reduced and re-obtained the soul of man unto the Church, wherefore he suffered many great wounds in his body. And now this Knight ; that is, our Lord Iesus Christ, hath a matter to do among us ; that is, to find in us perfect faith : wherefore he calleth on us dayly, that we would be ready at all times : saying thus, in Apocalyps 3. *Lo, I stand at the door and knock : If any man will open to me, I will come in and sup with him.* But many men do as the Emperor did, the which appointed the Knight another Judge then himself : for now a-dayes there be some men that will do no repentance for the love of him, which assigned no other man but himself to fight for us. And therefore against unthankful persons it shall be said thus : Lo, he suffered for us on the Cross, dispoiled of all his clothing, and shewed to us all his wounds that he suffered. Be we therefore thankful unto God for all his graces, and be content that we may suffer for his love some sorrowful repentance. For he that suffereth pain for the love of God in this life, shall receive an hundred times more reward in the life everlasting. Unto the which our Lord Iesus Christ bring all mankind. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

The soul of man is here warned to eschew the pleasant baite and subtil crafts of the Devil, that she yeeld not to his allurements, lest he get the vantage of this mortal course from her, and bereave her of her joys in the life to come.

The sixteenth History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a wise Emperor, named Pompey, which had a vertuous daughter, named Agias. This Daniel had many endowments above all other women in that Empire. First, she was fair and gracious in the sight of every man : also she was swift in running, so that no man might overtake her by a right race. When the Emperor understood these two properties in his daughter, he was right ioyfull : wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that what man, poor or rich, would run with his daughter, would have her to wife with great riches, if he could over-run her, and come sooner to the mark then she : and if she over-run him, and came sooner to the mark then he, his head should be smitten off.

When the States of that Empire, as Dukes, Earls, Barons and Knights, heard this cry, they desired themselves one after another to run with her, but ever this young Lady over-run them all : wherefore they lost their heads according to the law. What

time there was a poor man dwelling in Rome, which thought in himself, I am a poor man, and come of poor kindred, there is a common cry made, that what man soever can out-run the Emperours daughter by any means, shall be promoted to great honour and riches: now therefore, if I might over-run her by any manner of way, I should not only be promoted to great honour, but also all my kindred. Then this poor man provided himself of three things, whereby he might win her. First, he made a garland of red roses and white. Secondly, he made a rich girdle of silk cunningly wrought. Thirdly, he made a purse of silk, imbroidered with precious stones, and within the purse was a ball of three colours, and upon this ball was written this Poësie: *Who playeth with me, shall not be weary of my play.* Then put he these three things in his bosome, and went forth to the Palace gate, crying, and laying: *Come forth fair Lady, for I am ready to run with you, and to fulfill the Law in all things.*

When the Emperor heard this, he commanded his daughter to run with him. This young Lady went to the chamber window, and when she saw him, she despised him, and said: *I have overcome many worthy Knights, and now must I run with a churl? Nevertheless, I will fulfill my fathers commandment.* Anon the Damsel arrayed her self to run with him. And at the last they run together, and within short space the Damsel got far before him. When the Jugler saw this, he threw forth his garland of flowers before her. And when the Damsel beheld and saw it, she stooped down and took it up, and set it upon her head, and that while the Jugler went before her. But when this young Damsel saw this, she wept sore, and for sorrow she threw the garland into a ditch, and ran after him, and at last she overtook him, and laid up her right hand, and gave him a buffet, saying: *Abide, thou wretch, it becometh not thy fathers son to have me to wife.* And then this Lady did over-run him, and went before him a great space. And when the Jugler saw this, he took the girdle out of his bosome, and threw it before her. And when she saw that, she stooped down and took it up, and girded her therewith, and that while the Jugler gat before her again. Now when she saw that, she was wroth, and took the purse, and with her teeth tare it in three pieces, and then threw it from her: and then she ran fast after him, and at the last overtook him, and then she gave him a great blow, saying: *O wretch, thinkst thou to overcome me?* And with that she ran before him again. The Jugler was silent and subtil, and kept the purse till they were near the mark, and then he threw it before her, and anon she stooped down and took it up, and opened it, and took out the ball, and read the Poësie: *Who playeth with me, shall never be weary of my play.* And she began to play, and continued so long in playing, till that the Jugler was before her at the mark. And thus he won the Emperours daughter.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor is our Savior Jesus Christ, and his fair daughter is the soul of man, which was made clean by the efficacy of Baptism, and was also swift in running; that is, in vertue, while she was in her cleanness, so that no deadly sin might overcome her. This Jugler that is so subtil and crafty, is the Devil, who studyeth day and night to deceive innocents. He provideth him of three things: First, of the garland, which betokeneth pride: for why a garland of flowers is not set upon the arm, nor upon the foot, but upon the head, that it may be seen: so pride would be seen. Wherefore S. Augustine saith: *When thou seest a proud man, fear not to call him the son of the Devil.* Do thou therefore as the maiden did, be angry at thy sins, and cast off the garland of pride into the ditch of Repentance, and so shalt thou give the Devil a buffet, and overcome him. But when this Jugler; that is, our ghostly enemy the Devil, seeth himself overcome in one sin, then he returneth and tempteth a man in another sin, and casteth before him the girdle of lechery. And alace, there be many girded with this girdle of lechery: against which girdle speaketh St. Gregory, saying: *Gird we our loins with the girdle of Chastity; for whosoever is girt with this girdle, shall not lose the hope of life.* Then casteth this Jugler; that is, the Devil, the purse with the ball. The purse that is open above, and close under, betokens the heart, which evermore should be close in the bottom against earthly things, and open above to heavenly joy: and the two strings that open and shut the purse, betoken the love of God, and of our neighbor: the ball which is round and moveable to every part of its difference, betokeneth covetousness, which moveth ever both in young and old, and therefore the Posie was true that was written on the ball: *Who so playeth with me; that is, with covetousness, shall never be satisfied.* Therefore saith Seneca: *When all sins wax old, then covetousness waxeth young.* Therefore let us take heed that we play not with this ball of covetousness, and then without doubt we shall obtain through the merits of Christ, & blefs of Heaven & shall never end. Unto & which he bring us & shed his precious blood for us

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The Preaching of Gods Word and every good Prayer, is a sweet sounding melody in the ears of God, and hath a promised reward of God; yet there is now and then stirred up in us some let therof

by our whistling adversary the Devil, and we are hindered for a time, untill by the providence of God, godly Preachers be sent forth, which with the hook of Gods Word do win again our lost felicity, and so recover the fall of such souls as were seduced and led away, into the joyfull and perpetuall fellowship of the blessed Angels of Heaven.

The seventeenth History.

Sometime dwelt in Rome a noble Emperor, and a wife, named Theodosius, which loved greatly the Dulick of the Harp and likewise the pastime of hunting. It befall upon a day as this Emperor hunted in a Forrest, he heard a sweet noise of a harp, so that through the sweetness thereof he was almost ravished of his wits; wherefore he sought about the Forrest to find that melody, and at the last he espied at the end of the Forrest a poor man sitting beside the water, playing on a Harp full sweetly. Then said the Emperor: good friend, proceedest this melody from thy Harp, or no? The poor man answered, and said: My reverend Lord, I shall tell you the truth, here beside this water, my wife, my child, and I, have dwelt these thirty years, and God hath given me such a gift, that when I play on my Harp, I make such melody, that the fishes of this water come out to my hand, so that therewith my wife, my child, and I, have been sustained in great plenty. But, alace, sometime on the other side of this water there cometh a whistler, and he whistleth so sweetly, that many times the fishes forsake me, and go to him: therefore, my reverend Lord, I crave your help against this whistler. Then said the Emperor, I shall give thee good help: I have here in my purse a golden hook, which I will give thee; take it, and bind it fast to the end of a rod, and put a worm upon the hook, then cast thy rod into the water, and play upon the Harp; and when thou perceivest the fish to bite on the bait, draw them up to the land with that hook, and then his whistling shall not avail. When the poor man heard this, he rejoiced greatly, and did as he had taught him. And when this poor man began to play upon his Harp, the fishes came to the bait, and then he took them up with his hook, and lived thereby in better estate long time, and at the last ended his life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which greatly delighteth to hunt the soul of mankind in the Forrest; that is, the holy Church. He loveth also the melody of the Harp; that is, he loveth much them that teach the holy Word of God. This poor man that sat by the water side, betokeneth the Prelats of the Church, and the Preachers of the Word of God, which ought to be alwayes resident in their

their charge, and not in the World; that is, they should not set their delight on worldly things. The Preachers ought to have the Harp of holy Scripture, wherewith they may praise and honor God, and also therewith draw out of this world sinners. Therefore saith the Psalmist thus: *Praise the Lord upon the Harp; & sing to the Lord with a Psalm of thanksgiving.* Psalm. 98. 6. But now a-days the Preachers may say: Alas, for when I preach and teach the holy Scripture, the Devil cometh and whistleth so sweetly, that the sinners draw to him, and will not hear the Word of God: but they turn themselves only to the delight of sin. The Devil deceiveth also mankind by divers ways.

First, in the time of preaching he maketh some to sleep: and them that he cannot make to sleep, he maketh them to talk and clatter: and them that he cannot make to clatter, he maketh them so dull that they cannot understand what the Preacher saith: and them that he cannot beguile by these means, he putteth into them business, and causeth them to get out of the Church. Behold, how many wayes the Devil hath to deceiue mankind, and to hinder the work of God. Therefore every Prelat, and every Preacher, ought to have the golden hook of Gods VVord against this whistling, by which they may draw sinners out of this World up to Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Mans soul, the daughter of our Saviour, is right dear to him; and though he be careful for the confirming of her in the state of sincere life, yet she is seduced by the suggestion of the flesh, which being a grievous transgressor, yet is by earnest repentance and amendment of life, brought by the soul unto dutyfull obedience towards God and man, that thence forwards so continuing, they together may be partakers of everlasting blessedness.

The eighteenth History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Ptolomeus, which had but one child, a daughter, whom he loved so much, that day and night she was guarded with armed Knights: and over those Knights he ordained a Controuler to instruct them how they should do. He ordained also a Steward for to guide his household. And when all this was done, on a night as he lay in his bed, he resolved that he would go visit the holy Land. And when all things were ready for his journey according to his desire, he called unto him his Steward, and said: My trusty servant,

servant, I purpose now to go see the holy Land, and therefore I commit my daughter to thy keeping; and I charge thee, that she lack nothing, but that she have all manner of joy that appertaineth, to such a Virgin. Moreover, I leave to thy keeping five knights that be her guard: and I charge thee, that they lack nothing that is fitting for them. Also I leave with thee my gray hound, commanding that thou nourish and feed him as hitherto he hath been: and if thou fulfill all this that I have said, thou shalt at my coming again receive a great reward. Then said the Steward: My Lord in all that I may, I will fulfill your command. Anon, the Emperor took his journey toward the City of Jerusalem, and the Steward a long time kept well the Emperors command and the charge given him.

But at the last it befell upon a day, that this Steward had espied this young Lady walking alone in an Orchard, with whose love he was suddenly surprised: wherefore Straightway against her will, he deflowered her. And when he had committed sin with her, he gave her ill Language, and hated her more then ever he loved her before, and drove her out of the Palace: wherefore the Damself by this means being driven to necessity and great poverty, went from door to door, and begged her bread. But when the Knights that were her keepers saw this, they reproved shamefully the Steward of that inhuman deed. Then the Steward toward wrath, and for great hate that he had in his heart, he spoiled the knights of their goods, and drove them from the Palace. And when they were thus robbed and exiled, some for lack of living became thieves, and some men-killers, so that through his inconvenience they brought great harm.

Not long after, there came tidings that the Emperor was arrived in that land coming homeward. And when the Steward heard this, he was greatly troubled and moved in himself, and said: It cannot be but I shall be accused for my trespass, that I have committed against the Emperors commandment, and he hath ever been my good and merciful Lord: therefore better it were that I go and meet him with all lowliness and humility, and accuse my self unto him, and ask him mercy, then that any other should prevent me to accuse me to my Lord for my treason. Then the Steward straight put off all his cloaths, save his hose and his shirt, and took three ropes with him in his right hand, and barefoot, went and meet the Emperor. Now when the Emperor had espied him coming afar off in such manner, he wondered greatly. And when the Steward was come so near that he might speak to the Emperor, he fell down on his knees, and saluted him reverently. Then said the Emperor: What is befallen thee, that thou meetest me after such a sort? for in that thou art my Steward, thou shouldest have met me with a great company of noble knights. Oh, my Lord, quoth he, there is a heavy chance befallen me, for the which it behooves me to meet your Highness thus.

Then

Then said the Emperor : What chance is befalln thee ? My reverend Lord, quoth he, it behooves you first to ask me, why I bring with me these three ropes ? Then said the Emperor : Why bearest thou these three ropes in thy hand ? Then answered the Steward, and said : This first rope I bring with me to bind my hands and feet so hard, till the blood burst out on either side, for that I have well deserved. The second rope I bring with me to draw me at a horse tail upon the pavement, till that my bones be bare without flesh, for that it is but due to me for the great treason I have done against you. The third rope I have brought to hang me with upon an high gallows, so long till that the birds light on my head ; and on my body, and feed themselves on my flesh, for these things are due to such traitors and breakers of the Law as I am. Yet, oh : my reverend Lord, have mercy on me, for I dare not acknowledge my trespass, untill I have obtained your pardon. Then said the Emperor : I see in thee great contrition ; therefore tell me thy trespass, and surely thou shalt find mercy and grace. Alace, alace, then said the Steward : I have defiled thine only daughter, and have driven her out of the Palace, so that now in great necessity she beggeth her bread from door to door : I have also dispoiled thy knights of all their goods, and now some of them, in regard they lack living, become thieves and robbers, and some men-killers : and the Controulour of the knights I have slain ; but I fed thy gray-hound with the best meat, as long as I might, and tied him with a chain, yet at the last he brake his chain, and went his way, so that now he runneth about the Countrey.

When the Emperor heard this, he was sore astonished, and said : Hast thou deflowered my daughter, whom I loved so well, and also dispoiled my knights, and slain their Controulour, and the gray-hound which I loved well ; of whom I gave thee charge, is he gone also ? Surely, were it not that I had forgiven thee, and that thou hast humbled thy self so much, I would have put thee to the vilest death that could be thought : notwithstanding depart hence forthwith, and bring again my daughter, that thou mayest marry her ; and if any harm hereafter befall to her through thy default, then will I double thy punishment. Also bring again my knights, and restore to them their goods, and set them in their state and Offices as they were before. Also seek diligently for my gray-hound till thou find him, and then make him fast, so that hereafter in thee there be no fault found. Now when the Steward heard this, he bowed down with most humble submission, and thanked the Emperor for his great mercy. And then he went forth, and sought diligently through all the Empire, untill he found the Emperors daughter, and the knights, and the gray-hound, and brought them home again. And after he had married the young Lady, and restored again the knights goods, he ended his life in peace.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. His daughter betokeneth the soul of man, made after the similitude of our Lord God. The five Knights are the five wits, armed with the vertue of Baptism for the preservation of the soul. The Controuler of the Knights, is reason, which ought to rule the wits. The gray-hound, is the flesh of man: and the Steward is every man, to whom God hath given a life and soul to keep, under pain of losing everlasting life. But wretched and wicked man, not remembring what is to come, full often corrupteth and polluteth his soul with sin, and repelleth her from her Palace of Heaven, and then wandereth she from door to door; that is, from sin to sin. He dispoileth these five Knights of their goods; that is, the five wits, or rather gracious vertues, taking away the natural light from their eyes, and giving them bad counsel, and also moving their ears to listen unto slander and back-biting, and so forth of all the other wits: and thus some be made thieves, and some man-killers. The Masters of these five wits is slain, whensoever man is ruled by will, and not by reason. The gray-hound, that is the flesh, wherein a man delighteth, was fed and bound with a chain of reason; but breaking out, full oft doth much harm.

The coming again of this Emperour from the holy Land, betokeneth the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ at the day of doom to judge all mankind; wherefore let us, as the Steward did, accuse our selves of our sins first, lest the Devil and the World accuse us, then it is too late to ask mercy: therefore put we off our cloaths betimes: that is, our sinful life, and take we three ropes in our hands. The first rope, that should bind our hands and feet, betokeneth the rope of true repentance, which not only ought to bind our hands and feet, but also our hearts within us, and our outward conversations in such austeritie of life, that the blood burst out on every side, that is, that sin might void it self. Hereto accordeth Ezekiel, saying thus: *Whensoever the sinful man do he repent himself, he shall be forgiven.* The second rope for to draw the trespasser, is acknowledging of our sins, which should draw us from the beginning of our life, unto our lives end, by a perfect reconciliation of our selves to God and man, unto the time that the flesh be fallen from the bones; that is, till the lust of the flesh be turned away by the stones of repentance. For even

as the stone by nature is hard, right so the way of repentance ought to be hard. The third rope that should hang the felon, is the rope of amendment of life : for it is written in holy Scripture: *There is more joy in Heaven over one sinner that turneth unto the Lord in time, then over ninety and nine just persons.*

Like as the Steward brought again the Emperors daughter, so it behoveth us to seek about by a fruitful faith, untill we find again our lost soul, and to bring her again to the Church, to rule well our five wits, to feed our gray-hound as we should, and make our life so clean and pure, that we fall not again in sin, for fear that it fortune to us worse, and that we have no leasure to ask mercy again at our needs. And if we fulfill all this truly unto our lives end, without doubt we shall obtain everlasting life. To the which our Lord bring us all. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

The violating of our innocency in not imitating the Law of God, is here described, which being adjudged after the Law, is death ; but by the merits of Christ our Savior, we obtain salvation.

The nineteenth History.

In Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor, and a wise, named Enienne, who ordained a Law, that whosoever ravished a Virgin, should be at her discretion, whether she would put him to death, or would take him to her husband. It befell after, that a man ravished in one night two fair maidens : the first Damsel that he ravished desired that he should die, but the second desired him to her husband. The ravisher was taken and led before the Judge, that he might Satisfy both these Damsels, according to the equity of the cause. The first Damsel desired his death according to the Law. Then said the second, I desire to have him to my husband : and like as thou hast the Law for thee, so in like case I have it for me, and also my petition is much better then yours, for it is more charitable : therefore me thinks in my reason, that the Judge should give sentence in favor and furtherance of my desire. When the Judge heard the mercy of the second Damsel, he gave judgement that he should take her to wife, and so it was done.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. The ravisher betokeneth every sinner, which ravisheth Gods mercy, as often as he violateth the holy Commandements of God by sin ; for the Devil can never overcome man except he be suffered by the will. For S. Augustine saith : *It is not sin*

except it be voluntary. The ravisher also is called before the Justice, when the soul is departed from the body : and anon the first Damsel (*Innocency*) said against the sinner, that he ought to die everlastingly by the law of righteousness : But the other maiden ; that is, Christs merits, alledged for him, how the mercy of God ought to help by hearty Repentance, and acknowledging of sins, which is \S high way to everlasting life. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

The mother of the child of Grace and of the Reprobate, is here declared, and set forth : but which of them shall be saved, and which of them shall be damned, is not yet revealed to the world, until the last and dreadful day of judgement.

The twentieth History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour and a rich, named Lypodus, which took to wife a fair Virgin and a gentle, the daughter of the King of Assyria. This young Lady conceived and bare him a son, and in the birth she died : not long after her decease the Emperour married another wife, and had by her a son also : and Immediately after the second child was born, he sent them both into a strange Land, there to be brought up. Now when the Children had been there long time, the Emperours said : *By Reverend Lord, ten years be now fully expired since I bare my son, and yet I never saw him but once, and that was the first day of his Birth : therefore, I beseech you, my Lord, to send for him, to the end that I may once rejoyce me in his sight.* Then said the Emperour : *I have another child by my first wife, and if I send for thy son, then must I send for them both.* Notwithstanding at the Emperesses request he sent for them both : And when they were come, they were of passing feature, and well trained up, and so passing like in all things, that hardly the one might be known from the other : but the father knew the difference.

Then said the mother of the second child : *My Lord, I pray you, tell me which of these is my son ?* Then the Emperour called to him that son that he begat on his first wife. When the Emperours heard this, she gave all care to cherish him, and neglected the other child. Now when the Emperour saw this, he said to his wife : *Certainly, I have deceived thee : for him that thou lovest so much, is not thy son, but the other is thy son.* Then let her all her care upon the second, and set light by the first. When the Emperour saw this, he said : *Cruelly I deceived thee : without doubt this is not thy son, but one of them two is thy son.* Then said the mother : *My Lord, I must earnestly intreat you, that you would tell me without dissembling, which of them is my son ?* The

The Emperor answered, and said: Certainly, I will not tell you, untill they be both come to mans estate, and this my reason: First, I told you that this was your son, and you cherished him, and forsook that other: and when I told you that this was your son, then you slightly regarded the first, and cherished the second: therefore my desire is, that you cherish them both alike, that I may have like joy of them. When the Emperess heard this, she cherished them both alike. And when they were both come to age, the Emperor made a great feast, and before all his Nobles he told his wife openly which was her son. Then rejoiced the Emperess greatly, and when she had lived a good time, she ended her life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperors sons betokeneth those that be chosen to everlasting life, and those that be not chosen. The mother of them, is the providence of God that nourisheth them both; therefore our Lord will not that his providence should let the World know which be chosen, and which be not chosen: for if she knew that, then would she love the one and hate the other, and so charity among us would be overthrown, and we should live in discord and strife: but truth at the day of judgement shal tell to us which of them shal be saved, and which of them shal be damned. Therefore pray we in this world, that we may come to the everlasting feast in Heaven. Unto the which God bring us all.

THE ARGUMENT.

The ungodly of this World will not take any pains to live vertuously, and yet oftentimes they are enriched for the most part with riches of fortune; but they are not careful of the reward laid up for the righteous in Heaven, neither do they fear the torments of Hell appointed for the reprobates.

The 21. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a Noble Emperor, named Polinus, which had three sons whom he loved much. It befell upon a day, when this Emperor lay upon his bed, he bethought him to which of his sons he might give his Empire after his death. Then called he to him his three sons, and said: Whichever of you is most stouthearted, he shall have mine Empire after my decease. The first Son answered, and said: The Empire by reason should be mine, for I am so stouthearted, that if my foot were in the fire, I had rather it should be burnt, then I would take it out. Then said the second: I am, quoth he, more fit for the Empire than thou, for though there were a cord about my neck wherewith I should be hanged, and if I had a sharp sword in my hand, for ve-

ry sloath I would not once put forth my hand to cut the cord to save my life. And when these two brethren had thus said, then the third spake for himself thus: I ought to be Emperor before you both, for I exceed you in sloath, and I will prove it thus: I lay upright in my bed, and there droppeth water upon mine eyes, and for very sloath I will not move my head, neither to the right side of the bed, nor to the left, to save my self. When the Emperor heard this, he bequeathed the Empire unto the youngest, as to the sloathfullest of the brethren.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Devil, which is the Lord and Father over the Ungodly in the world. By the first Son, is understood a man that chanceth into evil company, by which he falleth into misdemeanor, and had rather be burnt in the fire of sin, then depart from them. The second Son betokeneth him that knoweth himself to be fast bound with the bands of sin, wherewith he is to be hanged on the gallows of Hell; and is so sloathfull, that he will not cut it away with the sword of true Repentance. By the third Son, is understood a man that hears of the joys of Heaven, and the painsof Hell, yet will he not move himself to the right nor to the left side to forsake his sins for fear of eternal pain: such a man without doubt, for his sloath, shall receive the Kingdom of Hell: from which keep us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Mans soul, as a Captain General, with his Forces of armed Vertues, fighteth against a Strong City, the World, wherein is the Castle of Vanity, and in that are the poisoned Forces of sin, as mortal Enemies of Mankind; against whom well to fight, is the Means to obtain the Victory, and triumph everlastingly.

The 22. History.

Alexander the mighty Emperor sometime ruled, who besieged a City of the King of Egypt with a great hoit; nevertheless this Emperor lost many worthy Knights, without any hurt or stroak. And thus from day to day his people died suddenly: whereat this Alexander wondered greatly, and was sorrowfull therefore in his mind, & he called unto him the wisest Philosophers that might be found, and demanded of them, why his people died thus suddenly without any wounds: The Philosophers answered, and said: My Lord, it is no wonder: for upon the walls of that Castle, within the City, is a Cockatrice, through whose sight your men die: for they are infected with a venome that cometh from her eyes, and thereupon they die.

Then

Then this Alexander asked, If there were any remedy against the Cockatrice? The Philosophers answered, and said: *O Lord, there is good remedy: for if it please you to set up a large mirror of clear glass over against the Cockatrice, between your host and the wall of the City, when the Cockatrice beholdeth her self in the mirror, the deadly nature of the venomous sight shall return again to her self, and thus she shall die, and your men shall thereby be saved.* Then the Emperor did as the Philosophers counselled him, and set up forthwith a large mirror of excellent clear glass: and thus was the Cockatrice slain, and the Emperor with his host made an assault on the City, and obtained the victory.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor may be called every Christian man, which ought to gather an host of vertues: for without vertue no man can fight spiritually. The City against which ye shall fight, is the world, wherein there is an high Castle; that is, Vanity of Vanities, and *all is but vanity*. In this vanity standeth the Cockatrice; that is, pride of life, desire of the eyes, the lust of the flesh; wherefore this pride infecteth so many, that they die in sin everlastingly. Wherefore the best remedy against this pride, is the consideration of our uncleanness, how we came naked into the World: And if it be asked, why a man is proud? Certainly, it may be answered thus: For default of clothing himself with vertues. What shall we do when we die thus ghostly, but set up a pure mirror of conscience, that by that conscience we may consider our slidings, and our brittleness, as in a glass, where we may see our own default. And if we do thus, without doubt the Cockatrice; that is, pride of life, desire of the eyes, and lust of the flesh, shall be utterly destroyed, and we shall obtain the victory of this worldly City, and by Christs merits win everlasting life. Unto the which he bring us all. Amen.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The soul of man being conversant in the body with the flesh, she seeketh by sinister means to overthrow the soul with her unclean lusts after the World; where though the soul for a time suffer shipwrack of worldly felicity, yet the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah is of power, not only to comfort her in necessity, but also to revenge her injury, and to make her to re-possess her former estate in the world to come.

The 23. History.

A Mighty Emperor sometime ruled the Romans, named Archelaus, who in his old age espoused a fair Lady, whom
a young

a young Knight loved, and had to do with her as oft as him list. It befell on a night, that this Emperor berhought him in his bed, to visit the City of Jerusalem, wherefore without any more delay he ordained all things necessary for his journey: and taking his leave of his Emperess, and of the States of his Empire, went towards the said City.

When the Emperess heard this, she took the Master of the ship ashore, and said: If thou wilt consent to me, and be true, ask of me what thou wilt, and thou shalt have it. The Master of the ship was corrupt with covetousness, and said: O my dear Lady, whatsoever thou wilt command me, I shall without fail fulfill it, so that thou wilt reward me for my labor. Then said the Emperess: Before thou doest ought for me, I will give thee what ever thou desirest, so that thou wilt swear to be true to me, and keep my Counsel. Then the Master of the ship swore to be true to her.

Then said the Emperess: My Lord goeth with you in your ship, therefore when he is in the midst of the sea, cast him over board that he may be drowned, and thou shalt have what thou wilt for thy reward. Then the Master of the ship swore a great oath, and said: By the great god Jupiter, after he cometh once within my ship, you shall never see him more. Then the Lady gave him as much gold as he would have, and he went to his ship.

And within short time after, the Emperor took shipping: and when he was in the midst of the sea, the Master of the ship took the Emperor, and threw him over board into the sea. When the Master returned again he told the Emperess how he cast the emperor into the sea, whereof she was right glad.

This Emperor that was cast into the sea, had learned in his youth to swim, and swam to an Island in the sea: and when he was faint, and like to be drowned, he prayed to God to be his help. At length he came to a little Island, wherein was nothing but Lyons and Leopards, and such other beasts as swam thither from other Lands. When the Emperor had got to Land in that Ile, he espied a young Lyon fighting with an old Leopard, and the Lyon was too weak, and was almost overcome. Now the Emperor had great Compassion on the Lyon, and drew out his sword, and forthwith slew the Leopard. The Lyon from that time forth followed the Emperor, and would not leave him for any thing; but every day the prey that the Lyon took, he brought and laid at the Emperors feet; and the Emperor smote fire on a flint stone, and boyled the body of the beast in the skin: and thus was he fed for a long season. At length as he walked by the sea shore, he saw a goodly ship come sailing by, and with a high voice he cryed. And when the ship-men heard the voice, they wondered what it might be, wherefore they sailed toward him: And when they were come near him, he said: Good friends, take me with you, and I shall pay you a good freight. So they took him into their ship, and the Lyon followed him, swimming in the sea after the ship:

ship: And when the Lyon was near drowned, the ship-men had pity on him, and took him into the ship. Now when the emperor came to land, he payed his fraught, and went forth with the Lyon till he came near his own Palace, where he heard Crumpets, and all other Musick: and as he marvelled what it might be, there came from the Palace a Squire toward him that he knew, but the Squire knew not him, to whom the Emperor said thus: Good friend, I pray thee, tell me what is the cause of this melody? The Squire answered, and said: The Emperess is married this day, and all the States of the Empire are at the feast, and therefore they make such melody. Then said the Emperor to the Squire: Where is her husband that was Emperor before? The Squire said: That he went to the Holy Land, and was drowned by the way. Then the Emperor said: Sir, I pray you, tell the Emperess, and the Lord that shall be her husband, that I (to please them) will show their Majesties rare sport with my Lyon. The Squire granted to his errand, and went in and told his Lord and his Lady, that a Goodly old Man was at the gate, that would show them sport with his Lyon. Then said the new married Lady: Bring him in, he perchance may deserve meat for his play. Then the Emperor with his Lyon was brought in, the Lyon without any letting on, ran upon the young knight that was newly married, and slew him: and when he had so done, he ran upon the Emperess also, and devoured her to the bones, before all the Lords of the Empire. And when the Nobles saw this, they were greatly agast, and began to flee. But the Emperor with his fair speech perswaded them, and said: Lo, this is the vengeance of God, for this my wife hath used Adultery long time with this Knight that lyeth dead, and she practised my death with the Master of the ship, and thereupon he threw me into the sea; but God saved me from death: And because I helped once this Lyon at a need, he never forsook me since; and now, as ye all see, when I came into the Palace, without provoking of me, he hath slain both the adulterers, and therefore understand ye for truth, that I am your Emperor. Now when they heard this, they looked more seriously upon him, and discerned him to be their Emperor; and greatly rejoicing, Praised God for that Miracle, which had saved their Lord and Emperor. And they lived together a long time in peace.

The Moral.

Dear friends, by this Emperor we may understand every Christian man, that purposeth to visit the City of Jerusalem; that is, to get everlasting life through faith. But his wife; that is, the wretched flesh, murmureth against the soul, and loveth better an adulterer; that is, deadly sin, then the husband. This Emperor went into a ship, taking his journey towards the City of Jerusalem; that is, he went to the Church of God, which

is the way to God : but the wife ; that is, fleshly men, accused him to the Master of the ship ; that is, to the Prelats of the Church, for great reward : which oftentimes do blind the sight of many Justices, whereby many perfect men be cast out of the ship into the sea to be drowned ; that is, out of the Church into the sea of this world. But what shall he do then that is thus cast to be troubled in this world ? Certainly, this ought he to do : let him learn to swim ; that is, let him put all his hope in God, and by his grace he shall come to an Island ; that is, the Religion of heart, and then he shall love ever the better to keep himself out of this world : and therefore S. James saith : *A pure Religion and undefiled before God even the Father, is this,* &c. And he that is in this Religion, shall find a Lyon, whom he behoveth to have against the Devil. This Lyon is our Lord Jesus Christ, that came of the Tribe of Judah, who fighteth ever against the Devil : and if a man have helped this Lyon ; that is, hath served God against his enemies at any time, he may trust well that he will not forsake him at his need, according to the Psalmists saying : *I am with him in trouble.* By this Lyon thou must tame thy wife ; that is, thy flesh, with repentance, and slay thy sin : and then without doubt thou shalt obtain the Empire of Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus, Amen.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The soul of man espoused to Christ in baptism, yet dieth by means of sin, having behind her son, called Reason, or rather the Word of God, which searched the disease of man her sinfull Father : and being sent for to cure the malady of his step-mothers will, he refuseth to administer ghostly comfort unto her.

The 24. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a noble Emperour, named Gregory, who married a verruous and beautiful Lady to his wife. This young Lady in due process of time conceived and bare a son, a fair and amiable child. When this child was ten years old, his mother the Emperors died : Not long after, the Emperour married another wife. The second wife could not affect or love by any means the Emperours son, but did him all, the shame and reproach that he might. When the Emperour perceived this, willing to please his wife, he exiled his son out of his Empire. And when the son was exiled : he went and studied Physick, so that within short time he was a skilfull and a cunning Physician. It befell not long time after, that the Emperour his Father sickned, and was almost

almost at death's doore: wherefore when he heard that his son was so good a Physician, he sent for him by letters, praying him, that he would come to him without delay. Now the son willing to obey his fathers commandment, in all haste came to him: and when he had felt his Pulses, he discerned the sickness, and Administered Physick to him, whereby he shortly recovered.

Not long after, the Emperess his step-mother began to fall sick, and many Physicians said, she would die. And when the Emperor heard this, he sent to his son to help her of her sickness. Then said his son: Certainly, I will lay no hand on her. When the Emperor began to wax wroth, and said: If thou wilt not obey my commandment, thou shalt henceforth depart mine empire. His son answered, and said: If you do so, dear Father, you do unrightly; for well you know, that you exiled me out of your Empire through her suggestion, and mine absence was cause of your sickness, now my presence is cause of her sickness, and therefore I will not Meddle with her, nor use any Physick unto her, for oftentimes Physicians are deceived in their patients, therefore I dare lay no hand on her: for if it would fortune her to die, men would iudge that my Physick were the cause thereof.

Then said the Emperor: She hath the very same sickness that I had. His son answered, and said: Though we have the same sickness, nevertheless you are not both of one Constitution: for whatsoever I did to you, you were therewith content: and when you saw me come within the Palace, you reioyced at my coming: and was greatly pleased with the sight of me that you begat; but when this my step-mother saw me, she was angry and took colly at her heart, and therefore if I should but speak to her, her sorrow would much more increase: and if I should offer to touch her, she would be in a rage. Also a Physician profiteth little, except the patient take pleasure in him. Now none can cure her of envy. And when he had spoken his mind, he took his leave and departed thence.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth every Christian man which is married to Christ in the Baptism of regeneration, for, then the soul is made the spouse of Christ, on whom our Savior begetteth a son; that is, the knowledge of his word and will. But when the child grew to some ten years of age, or to some increase in vertue, his mother Christianity died, then vertue departed from youth, and afterwards the Christian man his father matched himself with another woman, the step-mother of the said youth, Named ignorant Envy, which in no wise could affect the Emperors son of knowledge: wherefore she caused him to be banished into a strange Countrey, from his father

father and her both. It hapned that the good Christian man being over-ruled by his wife, falleth sick, and sendeth for his son; that is, knowledge of Gods Word and will, to cure him as his Physician, who dutifully performeth the same. But his step-mother falling sick at the sight of the Emperors son, though the Christian man her husband labors to him to cure her as a good Physician of her soul; yet she not liking his good endeavor to win her from ignorant envy of the truth, is very hardly healed of her sickness, but oftentimes dieth in her ignorant envy and wilfull wickedness, without any hope of health or life unto eternal salvation, so that the Physician comes thither too late.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

Jesus Christ the Son of God ought to be cherished and fostered in our hearts by faith and good life, which is taken from us when we are not thankful unto him for his graces. Wherefore the Preachers of Gods Word, as good Physicians, are sent unto us, for to admonish and warn us to persevere in amendment of life, and constant hope in Christs merits; and so to harbor him in our hearts, as he may thereby bestow on us the promotion of heavenly blefs.

The 25. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperour, named Solenus, who took to wife the Kings daughter of Germany, a fair Lady and a Courteous, which within short time conceived and bare a son. When the child was born, the States of the Empire came to the Emperour, and every one of them besought the Emperour to have the bringing up of his son. The Emperour answered, and said: To morrow shall be a Turney, and there you shall all be, and which of you doth best, and obtaineth the victory, he shall have the keeping of my son: and if he train him up well, I shall promote him to great dignity and honor: and if he do the contrary, he shall die the foulest death that can be thought. Then said they: Most reverend Lord, all this pleaseth us well. On þ morrow, when every man was come to þ Turney, þ States misten valiantly; but at length came a valiant Knight, named Josias, who so couragiously bare himself there, that he obtained the victory. And immediately after the Turney was all done, this Josias took the child, and led him home with him. And because the Emperours son should be received with State in his Countrey, he sent before to his Castle, and Commanded his Officers that they should Royally provide for him, and that the Childs lodging should be in the midst of the Castle: and also that the seven Sciences should be pourtrayed about the Childs bed. That when the Child waked out of his sleep, he might lye in his bed and behold the

the same. The Knight had a wholesome Well by the Childs bed-
fioe, wherein he used to bathe himself, and the Knights wife
bare the Key of the Well, and there was a window whereat the
Sun might comfortably shine upon him. It fortuned upon a day,
that the Lady left open the window through negligence: which
being done, thither came a Bear, and seeing the window open,
went to the Well, and bathed him therein: of whose bathing,
the Well savoured after, through the great heat which was at that
time in the hunted Bear, whereby whosoever drank of that water,
waxed leproous within short time after. So it fortuned that the
Lord and the Lady, with all the household, by drinking of the
water of that Well became lepers, notwithstanding it appeared
not presently. Not long after, it fortuned that there came a great
Eagle in at the window where the Emperors son lay, and bare
the Child away out of the cradle. Now when the Lord of the
Castle heard this, he wept bitterly, and said: Alace, alace, wo
is me, wretched creature, that ever I was born: what shal I doe
now I am the son of death, for I am become a loathsome leper,
and so is my wife with all my household: also the Emperors son
is lost and gone.

Now while he thus mourned, there came to him a Physician,
and said: Sir, if you will do after my counsel, you shall not re-
pent you. First, it behoveth you, your wife, and all your house-
hold, to be let blood, and after that, to be bathed and clean washed,
and then I will apply to you my Medicine: And when you are
whole, then shal you and your household walk up to the mountains,
and seek the Emperors son, for the Eagle hath let him fall there
in some place. When the Lord followed the advise and counsel
thus given him by the Physician: and forthwith he and all his
household were let blood, and received the Medicine, and within
a short time after were all whole and sound. When they were thus
healed, he took his horse, accompanied with three men, and rode
forth to seek the child, and at the last he found him whole and
sound lying in a valley, whereat he greatly rejoiced. And incon-
tinentely with great joy and gladness, he led the child home to the
Emperor his father. Now when the Emperor saw his son in good
health, he was right glad, and promoted him to great honor.
And so after that he had long time lived there in noble state, he
after ended his life in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven:
his son betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, to nourish whom many
men desire, at such time as they receive the Sacrament of his
Death and Passion. He nourisheth him best that justeth with
the Devil, and overcometh him by godly life. This Knight
that took this child with him, betokeneth a good Christian man,

that evermore abstaineth truly from doing evil, and laboureth continually to do good to all men. Therefore do we as the Knight did, send Messengers before to prepare and make clean the Castle of our hearts from all spots of sin, by lively faith, and so shall this child Jesus rest in the midst of our hearts.

The Well betokeneth mercy, which ought to be next our Lord : for whosoever is without mercy and truth, may not nourish the blessed child Jesus : but it happeneth oft, that the Knights wife ; that is, the flesh of man, beareth the key of mercy, and oft leaveth that Well open, and then cometh the Bear ; that is, the Devil, and leaveth his loathsome filth in the Well of mercy, and who so tasteth thereof, shal be infected with the leprosie of sin. The window wherein the Sun shined, is the grace of the Holy Ghost, by whom men are comforted ghostly. By this window the Eagle cometh in ; that is, the flying affections of the wicked world, carrying away the knowledge of God from us, unto the vale of ignorance and security, and then man hath great cause to weep ; but what shal we do when the child is gone, but send for a skilful Physician ; that is, a discreet Minister of the Word of God, which shal give him good counsel to let him blood and all his household ; that is, to put out sin through acknowledging thereof, and reconciling himself with earnest repentance unto his heavenly Father.

Then must he bathe himself with tears of contrition and compunction of heart ; and after that, take the medicine of amendment of life, and so live pure and clean from all manner of sin ; and when he hath done thus, he must leap on the palfray of good perseverance from evil, and ride forth with the three men ; that is, falling from evil, praying to God, and well deserving towards men : and then without doubt he shal find the child Jesus in the valley of humility, and not on a hill, that is, pride. And if ye do this, doubtless he shal have might and power to nourish that blessed child Jesus, for whose nourishing the Father of Heaven shal promote him unto everlasting joy. Unto the which joy he bring us that shed his precious blood for us. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Christ the giver of everlasting glory hath proclaimed a like joy and bleß in Heaven, as well to the poor as to the rich : but the rich oftentimes coveting all, loseth the prerogative which the poor in heart enjoy by the providence of God : Tet as he is a righteous God, be

he ordaineth both for the rich and poor, in such sort, that if they will, they may together joyfully be satisfied with the great plenty of his abundant graces.

The 26. History.

Sometime dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Fulgen-
sius, which governed his people nobly, and loved them so much,
that he made Proclamation throughout all Nations, that whoso-
ever would come to him, rich or poor, at a certain day, should have
their petition, whatsoever it were. When the mighty men heard
this, they were glad, and came at the day asigned, and every
man put forth his petition unto the Emperor, immediately their
petitions were granted and fulfilled, in so much that a great part
of the revenue of the Empire was distributed among them. Then
every man was joyful, and went home again, and took possession
of such Lands and Castles as the Emperor had given them.

Straightway after, the poor men in the Emperors dominions
gathered them together, and said: A common cry was made, that
whosoever came to the Emperors Palace should have whatsoever
he asked. The rich men have been there lately, and obtained their
petitions: therefore go we now, and try if we may obtain any
good of the Emperor. Now this counsel liked them all, wherefore
they went to the Emperors Palace, and there they put forth their
petitions according to the Proclamation.

When the Emperor had heard them, he said to them: Dear
friends, I have heard all your petitions, and it is true that my
Proclamation was, that every man indifferently should come and
have their petitions: but the rich and mighty men have been here
before you, to whom I have given all that I had, save only the
Royalty of my Lordship, and so have I nothing left to give you.
Wherefore the poor men sadly replied: Most gracious Sovereign,
have compassion on us, and let us not go away empty, for we
know well that it is our own default that we came not rather
with these other rich and mighty men: but sith it is so, we crave
your grace, that we may obtain somewhat by the which we may
live. Then said the Emperor: Good friends, though I have given
most of my Lands, Rents, Tenements and Castles, to the rich
men that came before you: nevertheless I have kept still in mine
own hands the Sovereignty and dominion over them, and that I
do give to you, and so they shal be your servants, and be obedient
to you all. And when the poor men heard this, they greatly there-
at rejoyced, and kneeled down to the Emperor, and thanked him,
saying: Lo, though we be come late, yet we be Lords over all these
other. And with this, they took their leave and went home again.
But when the rich and mighty men heard that, they were greatly
moted, and ordained a common Parliament among themselves.
And thus it was spoken among them: Alace, alace, how may we
serve them that sometime were but Defaults, and our subjects in
all

all manner of things, and now they be made Lords over us? Therefore go we all with one assent to the Emperour, and pray him for redress. When this was said, they forthwith went to the Emperour, and said to him: Reverend Lord, what may this mean, those that were our servants erewhile, be now our Lords? We beseech your Highness that it may not be so.

Then said the Emperour: My good friends, I do you no wrong, for my Proclamation was common, that whatsoever you asked of me, you should have your petition, and you asked only of me lands and honours, and all those I have granted you to your own desires, insomuch that I kept nothing for my self, and you were well content at your going hence. Now after that came the simple and poor men, and asked of me some boon according to my Proclamation, and I had nothing to give them, but only the sovereignty and dominion over you, which I kept in my hands: and when the poor men cryed so to me, I gave them the authority over you, yet I see not that you can blame me therefore: for I gave you all the wealth that I had. Then said they: O dear and gracious Lord, we pray you, let us have your help and advise in this so dangerous a case. The Emperour answered, and said; Sirs, if you will follow mine advice, I shall give you good and profitable counsel.

Then they said: We be ready to fulfill whatsoever you advise us for our profit.

Then said the Emperour: My loving friends, you have received of me both Lands and Tenements, and also great plenty of honours and preferments, the which by my counsel, you shall impart to the poor men, that they may grant unto you the Sovereignty, and that dominion which they have. When the mighty men heard this, they willingly condescended to impart their goods among the poor men, and they as willingly gave them again the authority over them, like as they had of the rich men. And thus were they both contented, and the Emperour was greatly commended of all the people, because he so well contented both parties.

The Moral.

Dear friends, by this Emperour is understood our Lord Jesus Christ, which made a Proclamation by his Prophets, Patriarchs, Apostles, and Preachers, that every man, both poor and rich, should come and ask everlasting joy, and without doubt they shall obtain their petitions. But the rich and mighty men ask for no other thing but worldly honor, and transitory riches; yet this world shall pass, and all the covetousness thereof; wherefore he gave them so much of worldly wealth, that he had nothing for himself, according to the Scripture: *The birds of the heaven have nests, and the Foxes of the earth have caves; but the Son of man hath nothing in the earth where he may put his head,*

head, Matth. 8. 20. The poor men be the meek in heart, of whom the Lord speaketh, saying : *Blessed be the poor in spirit, for theiys is the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matth. 5. 3. So it shal seem that they have sovereignty in Heaven above the mighty men of the world : therefore these rich men ought to impart of their temporal riches with the poor men, according to the Scripture : *Make you friends with riches of iniquity, that when ye shall want, they may receive you into everlasting habitation*, Luk. 16. 9. And according to Job 4. 9. *Give alms of thy substance, If thou hast but a little, be not a afraid to give a little alms*. And thus ye may attain unto the Kingdom of Heaven. Unto the which I beseech Almighty God bring us all.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Emperor of glory, Christ Jesus, hath two daughters, the one fair the other foul : the fair daughter is the World, and the pleasures thereof, the foul is poverty and trouble : The fair daughter is desired of many, the foul of few ; for he that loveth the world regardeth only the vanities thereof, but he that loveth God, will suffer all persecution and trouble for the obtaining of him.

The 27. History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a noble Emperor, named Domitian, which had two daughters, the one of them was passing fair, but the other foul and ill-favored: wherefore he proclaimed throughout all his Empire, that whoso would take his fair daughter to wife, should have nothing with her, but her beautiful and comely personage : but whoso would marry his foul daughter, should have all his Empire after his decease. Now when this proclamation was made, there came many Lords that desired to marry his fair daughter. To whom the Emperor answered thus : *Sirs, ye wot not what ye desire : for if ye marry her, ye shal have nothing with her but her beautifull and comely personage : and furthermore, if I give her to one of you rather then to another, you will grudge : therefore if ye will needs have her, and forsake my foul daughter, you shall just for her : and he that winneth her, shall marry her.*

Then the Nobles and States of the Empire greatly rejoiced, and for the love of that beautifull Damself, they would not only just, but fight also : so they set a day of battel, and many worthy men were slain on both sides; nevertheless, one obtained the victory, and espoused that fair Lady.

The second daughter which was foul and ill-favoured, seeing her sister so bestowed with great solemnity, wept dayly; therefore the Emperor her father came to her, and said : *Dear daughter, why mournest thou thus ? Alace, dear father, quoth she, it is no wonder*

wonder though I mourn, seeing my sister is married with great honor and gladness, and every man is joyful of her, and no man careth for my company; therefore, dear father, what I shall do, I know not. Then said the Emperor: O my dear daughter, all that is mine is thine: and it is not unknown to thee, that he that married thy sister had nothing with her but her beautiful corps: and therefore I shall proclaim in mine own person throughout mine empire, that what man will marry thee, I shall assure him the empire after my decease by Letters patent. Then this young Lady, though she was foul and ill-favored, nevertheless she rejoiced greatly in the promise of her father. Shortly after the Proclamation was thus made, there came a proper and young Knight which espoused the Lady, and after the death of the emperor, he seated upon all the empire, and he was crowned emperor, and the empress: and after that, they lived together a long time in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which had two daughters, the one fair, and the other foul: The fair daughter betokeneth the world, which is full fair and delectable to many men: The foul betokeneth poverty and trouble, whom few men desire to marry with. Nevertheless, a Proclamation was made by the holy Scripture, that whoso would have his fair daughter; that is, the world should have nothing with her but her fairness; that is, the worldly vanities, which fade and fall away like as the beauty of man: but whoso will marry the foul daughter; that is, will voluntarily receive poverty and trouble for Gods love, without doubt he shall obtain the Empire of Heaven, according to the Scripture, saying: *Ye that have forsaken all things for my love to follow me, shall have everlasting life.*

Many noble and worthy men have justed for the fair daughter; that is, have fought and travelled by sea and by land in this world for covetousness of worldly riches, and at length there be many slain; for there is nothing here but pride of life, covetousness of the eyes, and of the flesh, wherethrough these grievous sins all the world is put to great damage and mischief: So he that married the fair daughter; that is, the world, is he that setteth all his affections and whole desire upon the wretchedness and vanities of this wicked world, and will not by any means forsake this vain world, like a wretch. But he that marrieth the foul daughter; that is, the good Christian man, which for the love of the Kingdom of Heaven, and the everlasting

everlasting joys thereof, forsaketh all this world : and not only doth thus, but also despiseth himself, obeying the true and everlasting God in all things : such a man certainly shal obtain the joyfull and happy Empire of Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Devotion, Prayer, and thanksgiving unto God for his gifts, is a sweet sounding Musick, delectable in the ears of God : we are hereby warned after our first offending, not to return to our vomit with the dog, nor after washing with the sow, to wallow in the myre: no, rather let us bath our selves in the Well of sorrowful and hearty repentance, in perseverance in good life, that we may live with Christ in everlasting joy and bless.

The 28. History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Emperor, named Andromicha, the which above all things loved Musick. This Emperor had within his Palace a well, of such vertue, that whosoever were drunk, by drinking the water thereof, should incontinently become fresh again, and be delivered from all kind of dizziness. There was also dwelling in the Emperors Court a knight, named Porony, whom the Emperor loved much: but oftentimes, he would be drunk, which vice the Emperor hated above all things. And when this Knight perceived himself drunk, then would he go to the well and drink of that water, and so refresh himself, so that whatsoever the Emperor said to him, he would answer him so reasonably, y^e no drunkenness might be seen in him: & for his witty answers he was greatly beloved of the Emperor. Nevertheless, his fellows sought to draw y^e Emperors love from him.

It fortuned on a day, that this Emperor went to the Forrest, where he heard a Nightingale sing right pleasantly. Oftentimes after he would rise early in the morning, and sometime from his meat, and walk into the wood to hear her sweet song: wherefore many of his men said among themselves: Our Lord delighteth so much in the Nightingales song, that he reckoneth nothing our profit, inasmuch that through two things his love is withdrawn from us: that is, by Porony the Knight, and by the sweet song of the Nightingale. Then said an old Knight that was among them: Sirs, quoth he, if you will follow my counsel, I shall deliver you of the Knight Porony, and of the Nightingale, without hurt or death. Then they answered, and said: Whatsoever you advise us to do, we shall straightway fulfill it with all our hearts. When this Knight heard this, within a while after he chanced to see this Knight Porony drunk, wherefore he locked fast the well, so when this Knight Porony came to refresh himself, he found the well fast locked.

Now the Emperour had a great business to treat of, wherefore in haste he sent for this Knight, because of his great wisdom, to have his counsel. And when he came before the Emperour, he was so drunk that he could not move his tongue; neither had wit, reason, nor understanding to answer the Emperour to his matter. But when the Emperour saw this, he was greatly vexed, for as much as he hated that vice: wherefore he commanded anon, that from that day forward he should no more be seen within his land, upon pain of death.

This hearing his foes, they rejoiced, and said unto the Old Knight: Now we be delivered of this Knight Drory: there is no more to do, but that we may find a way to be delivered also of the Nightingale, in which the Emperour delighteth so much. Then said the old Knight: Your ears shall here, and your eyes shall see this Nightingale shall be destroyed shortly.

Not long after, this Old Knight espied that the Nightingale used to sit upon a tree even above the foresaid Well, whereas her mate came and coupled with her: Nevertheless in the absence of her mate, she took often another mate, & coupled with him. When she had thus done, then would she descend to the Well to bath her self, that when her mate came, he should feel no evil savor or scent of that she had done. When the Knight had seen this, on a time he locked the Well, and when the Nightingale would have descended to bath her self, after the coupling with the other mate, she found the Well closed: wherefore she flew up into the tree again, and mourned sore in her manner, and left her song. Then came her mate, and saw that she had done against her nature, he returned again, and in short time brought a great multitude of Nightingales, which slew his mate, and tare her all in pieces.

And thus was the wise Knight put away, and the Nightingale slain, and the Emperour put from his pleasure, and disappointed of the great comfort he was wont to have.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperour betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which loveth greatly the song of devotion: for when we pray, we speak unto God; and when we read, God speaketh unto us. The well that was in the Palace, betokeneth acknowledging of our sins to God: therefore if any be drunk with sin, let him drink of the Well of acknowledging of his sins, and without doubt he shall be safe.

This Drory betokeneth every man that willfully returneth again to sin after his acknowledging of sin, like as the dog that maketh a vomit, and casteth up the meat that he hath eaten before, and afterward when he is hungry, cometh and eateth it again. Nevertheless, if a man that hath thus sinned will

will drink of the Well of acknowledging his sin, he shall receive his ghostly strength.

The Nightingale that late on the tree, betokeneth the soul that sitteth on the tree of holy Doctrine. And her song betokeneth the soul that sitteth on the tree of devout prayers to God. But this soul doth commit evil, as oft as she consenteth to sin. Nevertheless, if she run to the Well of acknowledging of sin, and bath her with the water of contrition, God shall love her. But her foes; that is, the fiends of hell, seeing this, that God is merciful, they stop the Well of acknowledgement of sin; that is, they would withdraw us from dutiful acknowledgement, and from due reconciliation of our selves between us and GOD, and between us and man, without shame and dread of repentance, not to declare our sins. And thus through the temptations of the Devil our adversary, many have been exiled and put to death everlastingly. And therefore study we to bathe our souls in this life in the Well of acknowledgement of sin, with the water of contrition: and then we shall be sure in the World to come, to have joy everlasting. Unto the which God bring us all. Amen.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The soul of every good Christian man ought to prepare armed vertues, for to withstand the assaults of the Devil. We are here put in mind of our deliverance from death by the precious blood-shed of Jesus Christ; which is a terror to all the Devils in Hell, if we continue in faith, and believe in him the bulwark of our salvation.

The 29. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, named **Hermes**, which had a mighty strong City speedily strongly walled about, and a bell hanging in the midst of the said City: and whensoever the Emperor went to any battell without the City, this bell was ever rung; but there did no man ring the bell, but a Virgin. Within short time after, it befel that dragons, serpents, and also many other venomous beasts, poisoned much people, so that the City was almost destroyed: wherefore the States of the City went with one assent to the Emperor, and said: Lord, what shall we do? Lo, our people, our goods, and our City is almost destroyed, and you and we be in peril to perish through these cruel beasts that consume us; therefore take we good counsel, or else we are undone. Then said the Emperor: What think you is best to be done in this matter? And how may we be best defended? Then answered one of the wisest, and said: My Lord, here my counsel, and do thereafter, and you shall not repent it. You have

in your Palace a Lyon, set up a piece of timber for the purpose, and thereunto let the Lyon be nailed and made fast, and when other venomous beasts see him thus used, they will be afraid, and forsake our City, and we shall be in safety. Then said the Emperor: It pleaseth me well that he be so used, thereby to save you. Then they took the Lyon, and used him in like manner as afore said, which when the other beasts saw, they fled away for fear, and never more afterwards durst they come thither.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven. The City well walled, with a bell in the midst, betokeneth the soul walled about with Vertues. The bell betokeneth a clean conscience, that warneth a man to battel when he should fight against the Devil, that he might arm himself before with Vertues. The Virgin that should alwayes ring this bell, is Reason, which as a Virgin inclineth unto all rightfull cleanness. The venomous dragon that beareth the fire, betokeneth the flesh of man, which beareth the fire of covetousness, which burnt Adam our fore-father, when he eat of the forbidden apple. The venomous beast that poisoned the men, betokeneth the fiend of Hell, which for the most part have destroyed all mankind.

The States of the City, betokeneth the Patriarchs and Prophets, which besought God of counsel and remedy, that mankind might be saved: and anon it was counselled for the best remedy, that a Lyon; that is, Christ, should be nailed upon the Cross, according to the Scripture, saying thus: *It was requisite that one man should die for the people, lest all flesh should perish.* Then took they Christ, and hung him on the Cross: for the which the Devil dreads Christian people, and dares not come nigh them. And thus, by the grace of God, Christian men shal come to everlasting bliss. Unto the which bring us the Lamb of God, which shed his precious blood for us, Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Here is signified the thralldom of man unto Satan by sin, till Christ the Son of God descended with the power of the holy Ghost, to set him at liberty, and put him in possession of the Palace of everlasting felicity.

The 30. History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, and a merciful, named *Denelay*, who ordained such a Law, that what innocent person were taken and put in prison, if he might escape

escape and come to the Emperors Palace, he should be there safe from all manner of accusations against him in his life time. It was not long after, but it befell that a Knight was accused, wherefore he was taken and put in a strong and dark prison, where he lay long time, and had no light but a little window, whereat scant light shone in, that lighted him to eat such simple meat as was brought him by his keeper: wherefore he mourned greatly, and made sorrow that he was thus fast shut up from the sight of men. Nevertheless, when the keeper was gone, there came daily a Nightingale in at the window, and sung full sweetly, by whose song this woful Knight was oftentimes fed with joy: and when this bird leit off singing, then would she flie into the knights bosome, and there this knight fed her many a day of the victuals that God sent him. It beell after upon a day, the knight was greatly desolate of comfort: nevertheless, the bird that sat in his bosome fed upon kernels & nuts, and thus he said to the bird: Sweet bird, I have sustained thee many a day, what wilt thou give me now in my desolation to comfort me? Remember thy self well, hold that thou art the creature of God, and so am I also, and therefore help me now in this my great need.

When the bird heard this, she flew from his bosome, and tarried from him three days, but the third day she came again, and brought in her mouth a precious stone, and laid it in the knights bosome. And when she had so done, she took her flight, and flew from him again. The knight marvelled at the stone, and at the bird, and forthwith he took the stone in his hand, and touched his gins and fetters therewith, and presently they fell off. And then he arose and touched the doors of the prison, and they opened, and so he escaped, and ran fast to the Emperors Palace. When the keeper of the prison perceived this, he blew his horn thrice, and raised up all the folk of the City, and led them forth, crying with an high voyce: Lo, the thief is gone, follow we him ail. And with that he ran before all his fellows towards the knight: and when he came nigh him, the knight bent his bow, and shot an arrow, wherewith he smote the keeper in the lungs, and slew him, and then ran to the Palace, where he found succour against the Law.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, who ordained a Law, that what innocent; that is, what person imprisoned wrongfully, and might escape and come to the Palace in his heavenly habitation through repentance and true amendment of life, should find perpetual succour and help. This Knight betokeneth every one that is innocent, and accused by envy or malice unjustly, taking grief for his present estate. The Keeper of this prison betokeneth the Devil, that keepeth such a man hard bound by sin, and serveth him with riches and delights

delights of this transitory VVorld, that he should not escape from danger. The bird that singeth so sweetly, betokeneth the voyce of heaven, that saith to the oppressed : *Turn again, now turn again, thou prisoner* : that is, turn again, thou oppressed, and I will receive thee to grace. For when mankind was in thralldom to Satan in the prison of Hell, then came there a bird ; that is, the God-head, bearing with him a stone, that betokens our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the holy Scripture, saying : *I am a stone*. The soul of Christ descended with the God-head, and brought with him all mankind out of the prison of Hell : therefore if any of us be in the prison of worldly oppression, touch we our sins with the stone ; that is, with the vertue of our Lord Jesus Christ, by acknowledging our sin in faithfull prayer, and by true contrition ; and then without doubt, the chains of our oppression, with the stone shall be broken, and fall from us, and the door of heavenly grace shall be opened, and we shall obtain help and succour in the Palace of the heavenly habitation. And if the Keeper of the prison ; that is, the Devil, which is the blower of the horn of pride, lechery or covetousness, stir in us any sins, then turn we towards him manfully, and shoot at him the arrow of constant faith in Jesus Christ, by true and unfeigned repentance, and without doubt he shall flee from us : and then by the grace of Almighty God, we may obtain the Palace of heavenly blefs, where we shall behold the King of all glory. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

A poor man exalted to dignity, is here admonished not to be unthankful, and to render evil for good : but even to the most simple ones to be grateful for any benefit, else surely God that gives thee this promotion, will make the brutish creatures of the earth thine enemies, and depose thee from thy dignity ; and he that hath helped thee, be we never so base, may in the end have better favor with God and man then thy self : wherefore be warned of ingratitude by this example, and know thy self, thy God, and thy friend.

The 31. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, named **Ebolides**, it fortun'd on a day that this Emperor walked into a great Forrest to take his pleasure, where he met suddenly with a poor man : and so soon as this Emperor saw him, he was greatly moved with Mercy, and said : Good Friend, whence art thou :

thou? My Sovereign Lord, quoth he, I am your subject born in your land, and am now in great poverty. Then said the Emperor: If I knew that thou wert true in every thing, I would promote thee to great riches; therefore tell me thy name. My Lord, quoth he, I am called Lenculus, and I promise you to do you true service: and if I do otherwise, I submit my self unto all manner of punishment that you can put me to. When the Emperor heard that he promoted him Incontinently to great riches, and shortly after he made him a Knight, and Steward of his land. And when he was thus exalted to honor, he waxed very proud, insomuch that he despised both his superiors and inferiors. Not long after, this Steward rode by a Forrest, where he met with the Forester, and charged him that he should make an hundred pits in the ground, and cover them with green grais and smal boghes, that if wilde beastes fortun'd to go to the Forrest that way, they might fall in, and so being taken be brought to the Emperor. The Forester answered, and said: Sir as you have said, it shall be done. Not long after, it fortun'd that this steward rode to the Forrest again, to see if these pits were made: and as he rode, he berthought himself how wealthy a man, and how mighty in power he was made, and how most men in the empire obeyed him, and were at his command. As he rode thus thinking, he said to himself: There is no man greater then I: and with that he smote his horse with the spurs, and suddenly he fell into one of the deep Pits that he himself had Ordained before for the wilde beastes, and for the great deepness thereof, he could not rise again by any manner of means, wherefore he languished in great perplexity: and straightway after him came a fierce Lyon, and fell into the same pit, and after the Lyon an Ape, and after the Ape a Serpent. When the Steward was thus beset with these beastes, he was exceedingly afraid.

Then was at this time dwelling in the City a poor man, named Guy, that had no riches, save only an Aste, whereon dayly he carried sticks and wood that fell from trees, and such as he could get in the Forrest, and those he brought to the Market and sold them: and in this toils sustained himself and his wife as long as he might. It fortun'd that this poor Guy went to the Forrest as he was wont, and as he came by the deep pit, he heard a man cry and say: O dear friend, what art thou? for Godsake help me, and I shall Redempce thee so well that thou shalt ever after be the better. When this poor Guy heard that it was the voyce of a man, he marvelled greatly, and stood still on the pits brink, and said: Lo, good friend, I am come, why hast thou called me: Then said the Knight: Dear friend, I am Steward of all the Emperors Land, and thus by fortune I am fallen into the Pit, and here be with me thier beastes; that is, a Lyon, an Ape, and an horrible Serpent, which I fear most of all, and I tooke not of which of them I shall be devoured: therefore, I pray thee, get
a long

a long rope wherewith thou mayest draw me out of this deep pit: and I will make thee rich for ever hereafter: for if I have not help, I shall be devoured of these cruel beasts.

Then said this poor Guy: I may full ill at this time intend to help thee: For I have nothing to live on, but that I gather Wood, and carry it to the Market to sell, wherewith I am sustained: nevertheless, I will leave my purposed labor, and fulfill thy will: and if thou reward me not, it will be great hindrance to me, and to my poor wife. Then the Steward made a great oath, and said: I will promote thee and all thine to great wealth. Then said Guy: If you will perform your promise, I shall do what you command me. And with that he went again to the City, and bought there a long rope, and came to the pit again, and said: Sir Steward, lo, here I let down a rope to thee; bind thy self about the middle therewith, that I may pull thee up. Then was the Steward glad, and said: Good friend, let down the rope: and with that he cast the end of the rope down into the pit. And when the Lyon saw it, he caught the rope, and held fast, and Guy drew up the Lyon, weening in himself he had drawn up the Steward: and when he had so done, the Lyon thanked him in his manner, and ran to the Wood. The second time that Guy let down the rope, the Ape leapt to it, and caught it fast; and when he was drawn up, he thanked Guy in his manner, and ran to the Wood. The third time he let down the rope, he drew up the Serpent, which thanked him, and went to the Wood. Then the Steward cryed with a high voyce: O dear friend, now I am delivered of these three ravenous beasts, let down the rope to me, that I may come up. Then this poor Guy let down the rope, and the Steward bound himself fast about the middle, and Guy drew him up. And when he was thus holy out of the pit, he said to Guy, as followeth:

Come to me to morrow to the Palace, and then I will reward thee. Then poor Guy rejoiced thereat, and went home without any reward. Then his wife demanded of him: Why he gathered no Wood wherewith they might live that day: Then told he her of the event as it befell, how the Steward fell into the pit (and also the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent) that he had made in the said Forrest, and how he had holpen him out with a rope, and saved him from being devoured of the three venomous beasts: and that he should go to the Steward, and fetch his reward on the morrow. When his wife heard this, she rejoiced greatly, and said: If it shall be so, pray you rise to morrow at a due hour, and go to the Palace and receive your reward, that we may be comforted thereby. So in the morning Guy arose, and went to the Palace, and knocked at the gate: Then came the Porter, and asked the cause of his knocking: I pray thee, quoth this Guy, go to the Steward, and say to him: That there abideth a poor man at the gate that spake with him Yesterday in the Forrest. The Porter

Porter went and told the Steward as the poor man had said. Then said the Steward: Go you again and tell him, That he lyeth, for yesterday spake I with no man in the Forrest: And charge him that he go away, and trouble me no more. The Porter went and told poor Guy what the Steward had said, and charged him to go away. Then was this poor Guy terrible and went home: and when he was come home, he told his wife how the Steward answered him. His wife comforted him in all that the night, and said: Go you again, and prove him thrice.

Then on the morrow this Guy arole, and went to the Palace again, praying the Porter to do his errand once again to the Steward. The Porter answered, and said: Gladly would I do the errand, but I fear me sore it will be to thy hurt. Then went he in, and told the Steward, That this poor man was again returned. When the Steward heard that, he went out, and all to beat poor Guy, and left him in peril of death.

When his wife heard this she came with her ass, and led him home as the night, and all that she had she spent on Chirurgions and Physicians to help him. And when he was perfectly whole, he went to the Forrest as he was wont, for to gather sticks and small wood for his living. And as he went in the Forrest, he saw a Lyon driving before him ten asses, that were laden with rich jewels and merchandise. This Lyon drove forth the asses before Guy, which feared him sore, lest he should have devoured him; nevertheless, when he beheld the Lyon better, he knew well that it was the same Lyon that he drew out of the pit. This Lyon left not Guy till all the asses with the merchandise were entered into his yard, and then the Lyon did him obeisance, and ran to the wood. Then Guy searched the fardels, and found great riches therein: wherefore he made proclamation in divers Churches, if any man had left such Goods, he should have them again; but there was none that challenged them. And when Guy saw this, he sold the goods, and bought therewith house and land, and so was made rich: nevertheless he went to the Forrest as he did before. And as he was in the Forrest gathering wood, he espied the Ape on the top of a tree, breaking boughs busily with her teeth and claws, and throwing them down, so that in short time Guy had loaded his Ass. And when the Ape had so done, she went her way, and Guy went home. Now Guy on the morrow went to the Forrest again, and as he sat burning his fagots, he saw the serpent that he drew out of the pit, come toward him, bearing in her mouth a precious stone of three colours, which she let fall at Guy's feet: and when she had thus done, she kissed his foot, and went her way. Then Guy took up the stone, and marvelled greatly of what virtue it might be: wherefore he rose up and went to a Jeweller, named Peter, and said: Dear brother, I pray thee, tell me the virtue of this precious stone, and I shall reward thee for thy labor. When this Jeweller had well beheld and considered

stood the nature of the stone, he said: Good friend, if thou list to sell the stone, I shall give thee an hundred marks for it. Then said Guy, I will not sell the stone, till thou tell me truly the vertues thereof. Then said the Jeweller: Without doubt, this stone hath three vertues: the first vertue is, that whosoever beareth this stone about with him, shall have joy without sorrow: the second vertue is, that he shall have plenty without want: The third vertue is, he shall have light without darknels: and it hath also another vertue, that no man may sell it, but for as much as it is worth, and if he do the contrary, the stone returneth again to the first owner. When Guy heard this, he was right ioyfull, and said to himself: In a good hour I drew these beasts out of the pit.

Not long after, it befell that this Guy by the vertue of the stone was made passing rich, and bought great possessions and livings, wherefore within a while he was made Knight.

It was not long after, but the Emperor had knowledge how Sir Guy had a stone of such vertue: wherefore he sent for Sir Guy, commanding him to come to him in all haste, and so he did. And when Sir Guy was come to the Emperor, the Emperor said to him: My friend, I have heard say, that sometime thou wert in great poverty, and now thou art made rich by the vertue of a little stone: therefore, I pray thee, that thou sell me that stone. Sir Guy answered, and said: That may I not do: for so long as I have that stone, I am sure of three things; that is, of joy without sorrow, plenty without want, and light without darknels.

When the Emperor heard this, he had a greater desire to buy the stone then he had before, and said to him: Sir Guy, of two things thou must chose one: that is, whether thou wilt forsake this Empire, and all thy kindred, or else sell me the stone. Then said Sir Guy: My Lord, if it must needs be thus, be it at your will. Nevertheless, I shall tell you the property of this Stone, if you pay not for it as it is worth, without doubt, it will come to me again. Then the Emperor said: Surely I will give sufficient: for thou shalt receive of me therefore a thousand pound, and so it was done. Sir Guy received the money, and went home.

On the morrow early he opened the coffer, and found the stone, and then he told to the Lady his Wife, how he had found in his coffer the stone which he had sold to the Emperor. Then said his wife: Good Sir, haste you unto the Emperor again, and gave him the stone, lest he be displeased, and through malice repute some deceit in us.

Then went Sir Guy again to the Emperor, and said to him: My Lord, yesterday I sold you a stone, which if it please you I would fain see. The Emperor went for his stone to the treasury, but found it not: wherefore he was right sorrowful, and came again, and told Sir Guy, how it was lost. Then said Sir Guy: My Lord, grieve you not, for I told you yesterday, that I might not

not sell it, except I had the value thereof, and yesterday I received a thousand pound of you therewith, and this day I found it in my coffer again: and therefore if I had not brought the stone again, peradventure you would have shewed me your heavy countenance: And with that he shewed forth the stone, wherewith the Emperor marvelled greatly, and said: Sir Guy, by the faith that thou owest to me, tell me how thou camest by this stone. Then said Sir Guy: By the faith that I owe to you, I shall tell you the very truth as touching the stone. Your Steward that is so promoted up of nought, caused many deep pits to be made in your Forrest, and it fortuned that he not long after fell into one of them himself, and through the deepness thereof could not rise again. It chanced also the same day, that a Lyon, an Ape, and a Serpent, fell into the pit with him, at which time I was a very poor man, and took great pains for my living: and as I walked into the Forrest with mine Asses to gather Wood, he cryed to me for to help him out of the pit, and save him from death, for there were in the pit with him three venemous beasts: that is, a Lyon, an Ape, and a foul Serpent, and then he Promised me by his word, to promote me, and all my kindred, to great riches: which when I heard, I was right glad, and let down a rope unto him, supposing to have drawn him up, and haled a Lyon, and after that an Ape, and after a Serpent, and at the last your Steward. The Lyon gave me ten Asses laden with Merchandise, the Ape gave me as much Wood as mine Asses might bear, and the Serpent gave me this stone that I have sold you: but your Steward beat me, and wounded me so sore for my good-will, that I was born home upon mine Asses. When the Emperor heard this, his heart was moved greatly against the Steward, wherefore he examined him of that false deed: but he was dumb, and would not speak, for so much that he could not deny his ingratitude.

Then said the Emperor: O thou wretched creature, unreasonable beasts, as the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent, rewarded him for his good deed, and thou that art a reasonable man hast almost beaten him to death, that saved thee, and took thee out of the pit; therefore for thy falshood and wickedness, I Judge thee to be hanged this day on the gallows, and all thy goods and lands I grant to Sir Guy: and also I ordain that Sir Guy shall occupy thy place, and be my Steward: and so it was done.

When Sir Guy was thus rewarded by the Emperor, and made Steward, he was well beloved of every man as long as he lived, and at the last ended his life with honor and peace.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven: the poor man betokeneth every man that cometh into this world, and at last is promoted to great riches and worldly honor, as the

Psalmist saith: *God lifeth the poor man out of the myre.* But many such men neither know God nor themselves, but cause deep pits to be made; that is, unkindness and malice, they ordain against simple men, into the which pits the Devil oft causeth them to fall, according to the Text in *Ecclesiasticus*: *Who maketh a pit for another man, himself falleth therein.* Which Text was well proved by *Haman*, who caused the gallows be set up for *Mardocheas*, but was hanged thereon himself. This *Guy* that went dayly to the Forrest with his Ass to gather wood, betokens every just and godly man fearing God in the Forrest of this world: his wood that he gathereth, betokeneth his faith and good works, which he carrieth upon his Ass, humane endeavor, whereby his soul may have joy, and live in the tabernacle of Heaven. And as the Steward, the Lyon, the Ape, and the Serpent fell into the pit; right so a sinful man falleth into the pit of sin: But the Lyon of the Tribe of Judah; that is, Jesus Christ, descended with him, as oftentimes as the sinner hath will to come to grace: therefore saith the Psalmist: *I am with him in tribulation.* This *Guy* draweth up the Lyon; that is, mans soul out of the pit, by the cord of vertues; he drew up the Ape also; that is, contrary will to reason, that he may obey to reason: for of all manner of beasts, the Ape is most like to man; right as among all the strengths of the soul, discretion ought to be linked with reason and to obey reason. He drew up also a Serpent, by which is to be understood repentance, for two causes: for as the Serpent beareth in his mouth venome, and in his tail medicine; right so repentance beareth at the beginning bitterness to the doer, yet it is sweet and medicinable unto the soul at the end, and therefore every just man should draw to him the Serpent of Repentance. Then at the last he drew up the Steward from the pit of sin, according unto Christs saying: *I am come not only to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* Also it is written, that *Seneca* the Philosopher taught an Emperor many Laws and vertues of truth, and at last, as this Steward did, he sought the death of *Seneca*. Also Christ gave power to *Judas* to work miracles, as he did to the other Disciples, yet he betrayed him at last; Right so, now a-days many children of Belial delight more to do harm then good, specially to them that would instruct them perfectly both for the soul and body.

The Lyon gave to the just and godly poor man ten Asses laden

laden with merchandise ; that is, our Lord Jesus Christ gives unto every righteous man Ten Commandments charged with vertues by which he groweth to the riches of Heaven. The Ape also gathered him wood, as oft as the just man worketh the fruits of faith : for wood necessarily is profitable for two uses ; that is, to make fire, and build houses. Even so charity rejoyceth God and Angels in heaven, according to the Scripture : More joy is among Angels for one sinner that repenteth, &c. Charity also raiseth the house of heaven against the coming of the soul. The Serpent also gave him a stone of three divers colours, which betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we seek by repentance. Therefore saith S. *Jerom* in his second Table thus : *We should repent us after our shipwrack.* That Christ is the stone, may be proved by himself, saying : *I am a living stone.* Christ hath three colors, which betokeneth the power of the Father, the wisdom of the Son, and the humility of the holy Ghost : Therefore who so may get this precious stone, shall have the Empire of Heaven, joy without sorrow, plenty without want, and light without darkness. Unto which light bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

By the Nativity of Christ proceedeth joyfull gladness to the world, and salvation unto mankind ; yet is man unthankfull unto God, contrary to his promise made in Baptism. We are warned in all worldly tempests continually to cleave to Christ by Faith and Hope, to continue in well-doing, and to withstand the malice of the Devil. The Preachers of Gods Word are sent of God to confound the Devil by sound doctrine and good life. Life and death is set before men : we ought then to chuse that life that may be for our everlasting comfort.

The 32. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Anselm, who had married the Kings daughter of Jerusalem, a fair Lady and a gracious in the sight of every man ; but he was long time with the Emperor ere he bare him any child : wherefore the Nobles of the Empire were very sorrowful, because their Lord had no heir of his own body begotten. Till at last, it befell that this Anselm walked after supper, in an evening, into his garden, and bethought himself that he had no heir, and how the King of Amplus warred on him continually, for so much as he had no son to make defence in his absence : therefore he was sorrowful, and went to his chamber and slept. Then he thought he

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saw a vision in his sleep, that the morning was more clear then it was wont to be, and that the Noon was much paler on the one side then on the other. And after he saw a bird of two colors, and by that bird stood two beasts, which fed that little bird with their heat. And after that came many mo beasts, and bowing their breasts towards the bird, went their way: Then came three divers birds that sung so sweetly and pleasantly, that the Emperor awaked.

In the morning early this Anselm remembered his vision, and wondered much what it might signify: wherefore he called unto him his Philosophers, and also the States of the Empire, and told them his dream, charging them to tell him the signification thereof, upon pain of death: and if they told him the true interpretation thereof, he promised them great reward. Then said they: Dear Lord, tell us your dream, and we shall declare unto you what it betokens. Then the Emperor told them from the beginning to the ending, as it is aforesaid. When the Philosophers heard this, with glad cheer they answered, and said: Sir, the vision that ye saw betokeneth good, for the Empire shall be clearer then it is.

The Noon that is more pale on the one side then on the other, betokeneth the Empress, that hath lost part of her colour, through the conception of a son that she hath conceived. The little bird betokeneth the son that she shall bear. The two beasts that fed this bird, betokens the wise and rich men of the Empire, which shall obey the son. These other beasts that bowed their breasts to the bird, betokens many other Nations that shal do him homage. These birds that sang so sweetly to this little bird, betokeneth the Romans, who shall rejoyce and sing because of his birth. This is the very interpretation of your dream.

When the Emperor heard this, he was right joyfull. Soon after that, the Empress travelled in child-birth, and was delivered of a fair son; at whose birth there was great and wonderfull joy made. When the king of Amphy heard this, he thought in himself thus: Lo, I have warred against the Emperor all the days of my life, and now he hath a son, who when he cometh to full age, will revenge the wrong which I have done against his father: therefore it is better that I send to the Emperor, and beseech him of Truce and Peace, that the son may have nothing against me when he cometh to man-hood. When he had thus said to himself, he wrote to the Emperor, beseeching him to have peace. When the Emperor saw that the King of Amphy wrote to him more for fear then for love, he wrote again to him, that if he would find good and sufficient sureties to keep the peace, and bind himself all the days of his life to do him service and homage, and to give him yearly a certain tribute, he would receive him to peace.

When the king had read the tenor of the Emperors letter, he called his Counsel, praying them to give him counsel, how he might

might best do as touching this matter. Then said they: It is good that ye obey the Emperors will and commandement in all things. For first, in that he desired of you surety for the peace, to this we answer thus: We have but one daughter, and the Emperor one son; wherefore let a marriage be made between them, and that may be a perpetual Covenant of Peace. Also he asked homage and tribute, which is good to fulfill. Then the king sent his messengers to the Emperor, saying, That he would fulfill his desire in all things, if it might please his Highness, that his son and the kings daughter might be married together. All this well pleased the emperor; yet he sent again, saying: If his daughter were a clean Virgin from her birth unto that day, he would consent to that marriage. Then was the king right glad, for his daughter was a clean Virgin. Therefore when the Letters of covenant and compact were sealed, the king furnished a fair ship, wherein he might send his daughter with many noble Knights, Ladies, and great riches, unto the Emperor, for to have his son in marriage. And when they were sailing in the sea towards Rome, a storm arose so extreemly and so horribly, that the ship brake upon a rock, and they were all drowned, save only the young Lady, which first her hope and heart so greatly on God, that she was saved: and about three of the clock the tempest ceased, and the Lady drave forth over the waves in that broken ship, which was cast up again: but a huge Whale followed after, ready to devour both the ship and her. Wherefore this young Lady when night came, smote fire with a stone, wherewith the ship was greatly lightened, and then the Whale durst not adventure toward the ship for fear of the light. At the Cock crowing, this young Lady was so weary of the great tempest and trouble of the sea, that she slept, and within a little while after the fire surceased, and the Whale came and devoured the Virgin. And when she awaked, and found her self swallowed up in the Whales belly, she smote fire, and with a knife wounded the Whale in many places: and when the Whale felt himself wounded, according to his nature, he began to swim to land. There was dwelling at that time in the Countrey near by, a noble Earl, named Pieris, who for his recreation walking on the sea shore, saw the Whale coming towards the land; wherefore he turned home again, and gathered a great many of men and women; and came thither again, and fought with the Whale, and wounded him very sore: and as they smote, the maiden that was in his belly cryed with an high voyce, and said: O gentle friends, have mercy and compasison on me, for I am a kings daughter, and a true Virgin from the hour of my birth to this day. When the Earl heard this, he wondered greatly, and opening the side of the Whale, found the young Lady, and took her out. And when she was thus delivered, she told him forthwith whose daughter she was, and how she had lost all her goods in the sea, and how she should have been married unto the Emperors

Emperors son. And when the Earl heard this, he was very glad, and comforted her the more, and kept her with him till she was refreshed. And in the mean time he sent Messengers to the Emperor, letting him to know how the kings daughter was saved.

Then was the Emperor right glad of her safety and coming, and had great compassion on her, saying: Ah, good Maiden, for the love of my son thou hast suffered much too: nevertheless if thou be worthy to be his wife, soon shall I prove. And when he had thus said, he caused three vessels to be brought forth: The first was made of pure gold, well beset with precious stones without, and within full of dead mens bones, and thereupon was engraven this Verse: Whoso chooseth me, shall find that he serveth. The second vessel was made of fine silver, filled with earth and worms, and the superscription was thus: Whoso chooseth me, shall find that his nature desireth. The third vessel was made of lead, full within of precious stones; and thereupon was insculpe this Verse: Whoso chooseth me, shall find that God hath disposed for him. These three vessels the Emperor shewed the Maiden, and said: Lo, here daughter, these be rich vessels, if thou choose one of these wherein is profit to thee and others, then shalt thou have my son. And if thou choose that wherein is no profit to thee, nor to any other, soothly thou shalt not marry him. When the Maiden heard this, she lift up her hands to God, and said: Thou Lord, that knowest all things, grant me Grace this hour so to choose, that I may receive the Emperors son. And with that she beheld the first vessel of gold which was engraven Royally, and read the superscription: Whoso chooseth me, &c. Saying thus: Though this vessel be full Precious, and made of Pure Gold: nevertheless I know not what is within; therefore, my dear Lord, this vessel will I not choose. And then beheld she the second vessel that was of pure silver, and read the superscription: Whoso chooseth me, shall find that his nature desireth: Thinking thus within her self: If I choose this vessel, what is within: I know not, but well I know there shall I find that nature desireth, and my nature desireth the lust of the flesh, and therefore this vessel will I not choose.

When she had seen these two vessels, and had given an answer as touching them, she beheld the third vessel of lead, and read the superscription: Whoso chooseth me, shall find that God hath disposed. Thinking within her self, this vessel is not very rich, nor outwardly precious, yet the Superscription saith: Whoso chooseth me, shall find that God hath disposed: and without doubt God never disposeth any harm: therefore by the leave of God this vessel will I choose.

When the Emperor heard this, he said: O fair Maiden, open thy vessel, for it is full of precious stones, and see if thou hast well chosen or no. And when this young Lady had opened it, she found it full of fine gold and precious stones, as the Emperor had told

told her before. Then said the Emperor : Daughter, because thou hast wisely chosen, thou shalt marry my son. And then he appointed the wedding day, and they were married with great solemnity, and with much honour continued to their lives end.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven, who was long time without a natural son, therefore many men were in danger of perishing in hell. The Empress conceived when the Angel *Gabriel* said : *Lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a Child.* And then the firmament began to clear when this little Child lightened the World with his birth. The Moon began to wax pale, when the face of the Virgin *Mary* was overshadowed by vertue of the grace of the holy Ghost, and not only her face was thus shadowed, but also her body, for she was conceived with child as another woman, wherefore *Joseph* would have forsaken her privily and gone away. This little bird that came from the one side of the Moon, betokeneth our Lord *Jesus Christ*, who at midnight was born of the Virgin *Mary*, wrapped in cloaths and laid in the ox stall. The two beasts betokeneth the ox and the ass that *Joseph* brought with him, which honored him in his birth. These other beasts that came from far, betokeneth the shepherds in the field, to whom the Angel said thus : *Lo, I show you great joy.* The birds that sung so sweetly, betokeneth the Angels of heaven, which sung at his birth this joyful song : *Glory be to God above, and peace to men on earth.*

The King of *Ampluy*, which held war against the Emperor, betokeneth all mankind that were contrary to God as long as they were in the Devils power. But immediatly, when our Lord *Jesus Christ* was born, he bowed himself to God, and besought him of peace when he received his baptism : for at our baptism we promised to draw only to God, and forsake the Devil and all his pomp. The King gave his daughter in marriage to the Emperors son : Right so every one of us ought to give his soul in marriage to Gods Son ; for he is alwayes ready to receive our soul as his spouse, according to the Scripture, saying thus : *I will marry thee to me.* But ere our soul may come to the Palace of Heaven, she must sail by the sea of this world, in the ship of good life : but oftentimes there ariseth a tempest in the sea ; that is, trouble of this world, the temptations of the flesh, and the suggestions of the Devil ariseth suddenly, and drowneth the vertues that the soul receiyed in baptism ;

nevertheless, yet falleth she not out of the ship of charity, but keepeth her self surely therein by Faith and Hope. For as the Apostle saith : *By hope we be saved.* For it is impossible to be saved without hope, or faith. The great Whale that followeth the Maiden, betokeneth the Devil, which by night and by day lyeth in wait to overcome the soul by sin : therefore do we as the Maiden did, smite the fire of charity and love out of the stone ; that is Christ, according to this saying : *I am a stone,* and certainly the Devil shall have no power over us. Many men begin well, as did the Maid, but at last they be weary of their good works, and so they sleep in sin : And anon when the Devil perceiveth this, he devoureth the sinner in his evil thoughts, delights, consent and works. Therefore if any of us feel our selves in such wise under the power of the Devil, let him do as the Maid did, smite the Devil with the knife of bitter repentance, then kindle the fire of charity, and without doubt, he shall cast thee on the land of good life.

The Earl that came with his servants to slay the Whale, betokeneth a discreet Preacher, which dwelleth beside the sea ; that is, beside the world, and not in the world ; that is, not drawn to worldly delectation, but ever is ready with good words of holy Scripture to kill the Devil, and to destroy his power. We must all cry with an high voyce, as the Maiden did, acknowledging our sins, and then shall we be delivered from the Devil, and nourished with vertuous exercise.

The Emperor sheweth this Maiden three vessels ; that is, God putteth before man life and death, good and evil, and which of these be chosen he shall obtain. Therefore saith Solomon : *Death and life is set before man, choose which him list.* And yet man is uncertain whether he will choose life or death.

By the first vessel of gold full of dead mens bones, is understood mighty worldly rich men, who shine like gold outwardly in riches and pomp of the world ; nevertheless, within they be full of dead mens bones ; that is, the works they have done in this world be dead in the sight of God through deadly sin. Therefore if any man choose such a life, he shall have that he deserveth ; that is, such men be like unto tombs that be white, and royally painted and arrayed without, and covered with cloath of gold and silk, but within there is nothing but dry bones. By the second vessel of silyer, we ought to understand some Justices, and wise men of this world, who shine in fair
speech,

speech, but within they be full of worms and earth ; that is, their fair speech shall avail them no more at the day of judgement, then the worms of the earth, and peradventure less : for then shall they suffer everlasting pain, if they die in deadly sin.

By the third vessel of lead full of gold and precious stones, we are to understand a simple and poor life, which the chosen souls choose that they may be married to our blessed Lord Jesus Christ by humility and obedience, and such men bear with them precious stones ; that is, faith and her fruitful works pleasing to God : by which at the judgement day, they be espoused to our Lord Jesus Christ, and obtain the heritage of Heaven. Unto the which bring us our Savior Jesus Christ that died on the Cross, Amen.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

Man by Baptism promised to live in the fear of God, and forsake the Devil. Christ sorroweth for our sins ; he requireth dutiful service of us at six several ages, but we are always unready for him ; yet the mercy of God is so favorable towards us, that he spareth us even till the last age of man, vouchsafing, if then we repent us, and call for grace, believing in his mercies, to receive us into the Throne of his heavenly grace.

The 33. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Calapodus, who took a fair Lady to wife. They were not long together before that this Empress conceived and bare him a son, a goodly child and a fair. When he was of age, he was set to school, and when he came to twenty years of age, he desired his fathers heritage, saying : Dear father, you are an old man, and may not govern your Empire : therefore if it please you to give it me, it shall be to your ease. Then answered the Emperor, and said : Dear son, I dread me sore that when the Empire is in thy power, thou wilt not fulfill my will or my desire. Then answered the Empress (for so much as she loved her son better then her husband) and said : By Lord, that cannot be, for thou hast but one son : therefore, as I believe, he will fulfill thine intent in all things : This Empire may help him well, and therefore it is best to grant him the Empire. Then answered the Emperor, and said : I will first have of him a letter obligatory, that whensoever he doth any thing against my will, that then I will depose him from the Empire without any contradiction. The son granted this, and did make the obligation, and sealed it. And when this was done, this young Emperor waxed so proud, that he feared neither God nor

man, and did very much harm. But his father suffered it patiently, for he would be corrected by no man.

Now at last there fell a great dearth in the Empire, so that many men died for want of food. This old Emperor was all alone himself, and began to have need; wherefore he went to his son for to have some maintenance, which his son granted, and suffered for a time. But within short time his father began to wax sick, wherefore he called his son, and prayed him to give him a draught of his Dust. His son answered, and said: That will I not do, for my Dust is not good for your complexion. Then said the Emperor: I pray thee, son, give me a draught of thy Wine. His son answered, and said: That he should have none, for my Wine is not yet fined, and if I touch it, it will trouble, and therefore I will not broach it till it be cleared and fined. Then said his father: Give me some of the third tun. That I will not do, quoth he, for that Wine is not good for a sick man. Then his father prayed him heartily for a draught of the fourth tun. Then answered he, and said: Thereof get ye none, for it is feeble and without any sustentation, and such wine is not good for you, for it is not comfortable. Then said his father: Now, good son, give me then of the fifth tun. That will I not, quoth he, for that tun is full of lees and dregs, and such is not fit for men, nor scarcely for hogs. When his father saw he might get nothing of him, after he was perfectly well, he went to the King of Jerusalem, and made his complaint of his son, and shewed him the letter obligatory which his son had made, whereby his father might put him out of his Empire without any gain-saying. When the King heard this, he called the Emperors son to answer his father. And when he came, he could not answer to his father with any reason; wherefore the King put him out of his Empire, and seated his father therein again: and so he continued all the days of his life.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, according to that saying: *Is not he thy Father that hath brought thee up? He hath made thee, &c. Deut. 22. v. 6.* The son betokeneth the man to whom he gave all the Empire of this world, according to the Scripture: *Heaven hath given to our Lord, and earth to man.* Mankind made an obligation with our Lord Jesus Christ, when he received the Sacrament of Baptism, wherein he promised to serve him truly, and forsake the Devil, and all his pomp and vain glory. This Emperor began to wax sick on a day; that is, our Lord Jesus Christ is troubled as oft as a Christian sinneth and breaketh his Commandments, wherefore he thirsts greatly for the help of our souls, and then he asketh a draught of the first tun; that is, he asketh of man the first

age of childhood to be spent in his service ; but incontinently the wicked child answereth, and saith : I may not do so, for my childhood is musty ; that is, it is so tender and young, that it may not attempt so soon to serve God : which is manifestly against the truth, for the child of one day is not without sin. For S. Gregory in his Dialogue saith : *The children of five years of age drive out spirits from the bosomes of their fathers.* Then when God seeth that he cannot have of the must of his child-hood, then desireth he the wine of the second tun. Then answereth the wicked youth, and saith : That his wine is not apt to serve God. And when God may not have of the second tun, then asketh he of the third tun ; that is, the third tun of his youth. Then answereth the wicked young man, and saith : The wine is very strong and mighty, and therefore his youth ought to be spent about manly deeds on this world, and not in good life, which would make him feeble and weak. When God seeth he may not have of this tun, then asketh he of the fourth tun. And then answereth the wicked man in his man-hood, and saith ; That aged men are feeble, and may not fast, or do any hard repentance ; and if he did, he should be the cause of his own death. Then asketh our Lord of the fifth tun ; that is, of his old age, when he stoopeth, and may not go without a staff. But the wicked old man excuseth himself, and saith, that his wine is too feeble to give such a feeble man : for if he should fast one day, it were time on the morrow to make his grave. And when our Lord seeth he may not have the fifth tun, then asketh he of the sixth tun ; that is, when a man is blind, and may go to sin no more, yet desireth he of such a man drink ; that is, help for his soul : But the wretched man lying in despair, saith : Alace, alace, wo to me, because I served not Almighty God my Maker and Redeemer, here in times past, while I was in youth and in prosperity ; now there is nothing left but only the lees and dregs of wretchedness : Therefore what shall it avail me now to turn toward God ? But for such men we should lament.

Nevertheless, God is merciful, that though he might have no service of man in all his time, yet he is content to have the lees of his tun ; that is, the good will, though he doth not serve him otherwise, and so shall his good will stand him in stead of godly life. *For in what hour the sinner doth repent him of his sin from the bottom of his heart, he shal be forgiven, as Ezekiel* witnesseth.

witneseth. But there be many that will give no wine, nor no other thing to him; wherefore Christ shall complain to the King of Jerusalem; that is, to the God-head at the Judgement day, and then as he is God and man, shal he give a sentence definitive against such men, saying: *I have hungred, and ye gave me no meat: I have been naked, and ye clothed me not: I have thirsted, and ye gave me no drink.* Lo, thus shal he rehearse to thee the fruits of thy faith. And when this is done, then shal such men be put to everlasting pain, and the just man into everlasting blefs. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Man being captivated by Satan the world refuseth to do for him, till the God-head of the heavenly Father, bearing an earnest affection unto him, did espouse him, and imbrace him within the bosome of inward and entire love, adventuring what he might to set all mankind at liberty, yet grudgeth the world that we should alwayes serve our God, and forsake her: but to eschew all such malignity, we are taught in this History.

The 34. History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperour, named Anchony, under whose reign y^e Rovers of the sea had taken prisoner a mighty mans son of another Region, and brought him to this Emperours prison being bound. When this young man was thus in prison, he incontinent wrote to his father for his ransome; but he would neither pay his ransome, nor send him any thing for to comfort him. This when he heard, he wept sore, and would not be comforted for the unkindness of his father. This Emperour had a fair daughter, which visited every day the prisoner, and comforted him asmuch as she might, wishing him to be merry. To whom the prisoner answered, and said: *How shall I be merry? or how may I ioy, thus so lyf fast bound in prison from the sight of man? and notwithstanding this, it grieveth me most that my father will not pay my ransome.* When the Maiden heard this, she was moved with pittie, and said: *Dear friend, I am soyr for thee, and therefore if thou wilt grant me one thing, I shall deliver thee from thine anguish and pain.* What thing is that? quoth he. *That thou wilt take me for thy wife.* Then said the prisoner: *I promise you surely to fulfill your request and desire: and for the more assurance, I plight you my troth.* When he had so done, shortly after the Damself delivered him out of prison, and fled away with him home to his fathers house.

When his father saw his son and the Maiden together, he asked the cause why he brought the Maiden with him? Then said his son:

son: Sir, this Damsel delivered me out of prison, and therefore she shall be my wife. Then said his father: I will not content that she shall be thy wife, for two reasonable causes, which I shall forthwith shew thee. The first is this, it is not unknown to thee, that the Emperor her father might have had for thy deliverance great plenty of Riches, and forasmuch as she was untrue to her own father, and true to thee, it seemed well that thou shouldst not trust long to her: for being false to her own father, it is to be feared she will not be true to another man. The second reason is this, the cause why she delivered thee out of prison, was neither for pity nor for love, but for carnal lust that she had to thee. For at thy deliverance she made covenant with thee to be thy wife, and had of thee thy troth, and hath accompanied with thee: therefore son, saith he, it is no reason that she should be thy wife.

The Maiden answered to these objections, and said: As for the first reason that thou sayest against me, that I should be untrue to my father, that is false: for my father hath plenty of riches, and thy son is but poor, and therefore I help him for pity, and for none other cause, and nevertheless thou art his father, wouldest not pay his ransom, & he might be delivered out of prison. Lo, for this cause I have delivered him: therefore I am kinder to him then thou that art his own father, and he is more beholden to me then to thee. Unto the other reason, whereas thou sayest, that I delivered him because of carnal lust: I answer, and say plainly, that it is not truth: for all manner of carnal love is caused of strength and beauty; but thy son is neither strong nor beautiful, for his imprisonment hath taken away his strength and beauty; for by the pain he hath had in prison, he is brought low, and made un lusty to sport, and therefore pity only moved me to deliver him, and not carnal lust. Then said the son: Dear father, forasmuch as I was in peril of death, and wrote unto you to pay my ransom, that I might be delivered, and you would not help me: but this Gentle Damsel for pity hath saved me from death, and delivered me out of prison, therefore surely she shall be my wife. So forthwith he married her with great honor, and with her ended his life.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven. The young man that was taken with the Pirates of the sea, betokeneth all mankind, which was taken with the Devil, by the sin of our fore-father *Adam*, and was cast into the prison of Hell with great sorrow and pain. His father would not ransom him; that is, the world would do nothing for him.

This fair daughter betokeneth the God-head, which came down from Heaven, and took man-hood of the Virgin *Mary*, and so made a ghostly marriage between him and man: and upon this condition he delivered mankind out of the prison of Hell,

Hell, when he came from Heaven, and forsook the fellowship of Angels for to dwell with us in this wretched vale of tears. But the father, that betokeneth the world, grudgeth ever against him, and would not suffer that the soul of man should become the Spouse of Jesus Christ, but that he should always serve him, and should forsake our Lord. Therefore if we follow the world and its vanities, certainly we shall fall into the snare of the Devil. From the which defend us our blessed Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

It is the Ordinance of God, that no man shal labor for worldly promotion by covetousness and falshood, nor by deceit, or other evil courses. Man for his first transgression should have been adjudged to perpetual torment in Hell, had not the Son of God voluntarily offered himself to the death, to save mankind, and destroy Satan his enemy, so that thereby he might live with him in the habitation of Heaven everlastingly.

The 35. History.

Sometime in Rome there dwelt a noble Emperor of great livelyhood, named Alexander, which above all vertues loved the virtue of bounty, wherefore he ordained a Law for great charity, that no man under pain of death should turn a plaice in his dish at his meat, but only eat the whyte side, and not the black; and if any man would attempt to do the contrary, he should suffer death without any pardon: but yet ere he died, he should ask three petitions of the Emperor what him list (except his life) which should be granted him. It befell after upon a day, that there came an Earl and his son of a strange Countrey, to speak with the Emperor: and when the Earl was set at meat, he was served with a plaice, and he which was an hungry, and had an appetit to his meat, after he had eaten the white side, he turned the black side, and began to eat thereof: wherefore straightway he was accused to the Emperor, because he had offended against the Law. Then said the Emperor: Let him die according to the Law without any delay.

When the Earls son heard that his father should die, immediately he fell down on both his knees before the Emperor, and said: O my reverend Lord, I must humbly intreat you, that I may die for my father. Then said the Emperor: It pleaseth me well, so that one die for the offence. Then said the Earls son: Sith it is so that I must die, I ask the benefit of the Law: that is, that I may have three petitions granted ere I die. The Emperor answered, and said: Ask what thou wilt, there shall no man say thee nay. Then said the young Knight: My Lord, you have but one daughter, the which I desire of your Highness, that she

she may by one night with me before I die. The Emperor granted for fulfilling of the Law, though it were against his will. Nevertheless, this Knight deflowered her not as at that night: therefore he greatly pleased the Emperor. The second petition is this: I ask all thy treasure. And immediately the Emperor granted, because he would not be called a breaker of the Law. And when the Earls son had received the Emperors treasure, he imparted it both to poor and to rich, by means whereof he obtained their good wills. My third petition is this: I ask, my Lord, that all their eyes may be put out incontinent that saw my father eat the black side of the plaice. Wherefore the Emperor made inquisition immediately, who it was that saw the Earl turn the black side of the plaice. And they that saw him turn the plaice bethought them, and said within themselves, if we acknowledge that we saw him do this trespass, then shall our eyes be put out: and therefore it is better that we hold us still. And so there was none found that would accuse him. When the Earls son saw this, he said to the emperor: My Lord, quoth he, ye see there is no man accuseth my father: therefore give me rightfull judgment. Then said the emperor: Forasmuch as no man will acknowledge that they saw him turn the plaice, therefore I will not that thy father shall die. So, thus the son saved his fathers life, and after the decease of the emperor married his daughter.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven, which ordained a Law that no man should turn the black side of a plaice; that is, there should no man labor for riches and promotion by covetousness and falshood. The Earl that came to the Emperor, betokeneth *Adam* our fore-father, who came out of the land of *Eden*, and turned up the black side of the plaice, when he ate of the apple of the forbidden tree, wherefore he should have been condemned to everlasting death: but his son, that betokeneth our Lord *Jesus Christ*, he took the flesh of *Adam*, and proffered himself voluntarily to die for him: and the Father of Heaven granted that he should go down to die for mankind.

Nevertheless, before he died he asked three petitions of his Father of Heaven. The first was this, that he might have by him his daughter, which betokeneth the soul of man, and bring her with him into the bosome of Heaven, according to the words of *Hosea*, saying: *I will wed her to my self*. The second petition was this, all the Emperors treasure, which betokeneth the treasure of heaven, according to the Scripture: *Like as the Father hath disposed for me, so I dispose for you*. The third petition

is this, that all their eyes should be put out; that is, that the Devil, and all false witnesses which accuse us true men, might be put from the light of heavenly grace. And thus saved he mankind, and led him up with him unto the Palace of Heaven. Unto the which Palace bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Father of Heaven of his meer grace promoteth some poor men, raising them from the dust to sit among Princes; but they extolling themselves without regard of Gods goodness, they are again made abject by him. The Devil worketh deceit in his members against the Godly. Christ came down from Heaven, to minister the water of eternal life unto man, and by his death and Passion to revive our souls, which before were dead, unto the firm state of eternal felicity, and to purchase happiness with his precious blood.

The 36. History.

IN Rome there dwelt sometime a Mighty Emperor, named Leonicius, who on a day rode to a Forrest to Disport himself, where he met Suddenly with a poor man, to whom he said thus: Friend, what art thou? And whence comest thou? By Lord, quoth he, I am come from the next City, and I am your man. Then said the Emperor: Thou seemest poor, therefore if thou be honest and true, I will promote thee to great riches and honour. Then answered the poor man and said: By Lord, I promise you faithfully to be true to you as long as I live. The Emperor anon made him a Knight, and gave him great riches: when he was thus promoted, he waxed so proud, that he thought himself more able to be an Emperor than his Lord: wherefore he made suggestion to divers Lords of that Empire, that he might usurp and take upon him through strength of them to be Emperor. When the Emperor heard this, anon he exiled him, and all those that were continuing to him, so that they lived abjects in great wretchedness and sorrow: and then the Emperor ordained other men in their stead, and gave them all the possessions of these Traitors. And when the banished men heard that strangers had taken possession of their lands and goods, anon they conspired against them, and through treason requested them to a banquet. And they as innocents, thinking upon no such treason, came at the day assigned, and were served with five Poisoned messes, whereby as many as tasted of those dishes died incontinent. When the Emperor heard this, he was greatly moved, and assembled his Counsel, to enquire what was best to be done for this treason, and for their death. Then said the Emperors son: By Lord, I am your son, and you are my Father, and therefore I shall give you good counsel, and profitable to all men. Not far hence is a little Nation, wherein dwelleth a fair Maiden, and a gracious in the sight of every man,

man, which hath an Orchard, wherein is a well, the water whereof is of such vertue, that if it be cast upon a dead man, straightway he shall live again, and recover his life. Therefore, my Lord, I shall descend unto that Nation, and seek that water, whereby they that were slain at the banquet may be restored again to life. And when the Emperor heard this, he greatly rejoiced, and said thus: Son, thy counsel is good. And straightway the Emperors son went unto the said Nation, and fell in conceit with the Maiden, inso-much that he entered into the Garden, and assailed to taste the water of the well. And when he had so done, he made five deep trenches in the ground, in the which the water ran till it came where the dead men lay buried: hereupon when the water touched them, they arose from death to life. Then the Emperors son with great joy led them unto his father. And when the Emperor saw this, he was right joyfull, wherefore he crowned his son with a laurel crown in token of victory, and so he ended his life in rest and peace.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven. The poor man that was promoted, betokeneth *Lucifer*, that was exalted of nought, and enthroned in the Empire of Heaven with great joy and clearness; but through his pride he thought he might be like unto Almighty God, and not only like him, but more then Almighty God: wherefore the Father of Heaven exiled him, and all them that consented to him, to Hell: and in his place, man was exalted to great joy and honor. The Devil seeing this, it much grieved him that man should come to such glory and honor, and bade *Adam* and *Eve* to a banquet, when they did eat of the apple against Gods Commandment, and counselled them thus, saying: *In what hour ye eat of this apple, ye shall be like Gods, knowing good and evil.* And at this cursed banquet they were served with five messes that were poisoned; that is, their five wits were accorded in eating of y apple, whereof man was infected and died. This hearing the Emperors son, Christ Jesus, moved with mercy, he came down from Heaven into this world, and acquainted him so well with the blessed Virgin *Mary*, that he found in her the well of manhood, and conjoynd it to the God-head, according to the Scripture: *I am the well of life: who drinketh of me, shall not thirst.* After that, he suffered to be made five trenches in the ground; that is, five wounds in his body, out of the which ran both blood and water, whereby all mankind was raised from death to life, and led them up into the Palace of Heaven. Unto the

which bring us our blessed Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Father of Heaven extendeth his goodness divers ways towards frail man, yet he taketh contrary ways, living in spiritual fornication : for the which being exiled from the state of felicity, he is compelled to lead a miserable and painfull life. But being reconciled by the death of his Savior he repossesseth the heritage of heavenly felicity.

The 37. History.

Sometime in Rome there reigned a mighty Emperor, named Dunstanus, in whose Empire there dwelt a gentle Knight that had two sons. One of his sons matched himself against his fathers will with a common harlot. The knight hearing this, exiled his son from him, and when he was thus exiled, he begot on this woman a son : and soon after that he waxed sick, and in penury : wherefore he sent Messengers to his father, beseeching him of his mercy. This hearing his father, he took compassion and ruth on him, wherefore he was reclaimed from banishment. And when he was thus brought again to his fathers grace, he gave his child which he had by the common woman to his father, who kindly received him, and nourished him as his son. When the other son heard this, he said to his father : Father, quoth he, it seemeth to me that you are out of your right mind, which I will prove by good reason. For he is out of his right mind that receiveth a false heir, and nourisheth him, whose father hath endamaged and grieved him before. Now my brother which begat this child hath done you great injury, when he married the common woman against your will and commandment, therefore me thinketh that you are out of your right mind.

Then answered his father, and said : Because thy brother is reconciled to me, thou art envious, and thou art unkind to thine own brother, willing to put him from thy fellowship for evermore, but soothly no unkind man that have mine heritage, except he be reconciled, and yet thou never reconciledst thy self to him for thine unkindness : for thou mightest have reconciled thy self to him, but thou wouldest not : therefore of mine heritage gettell thou no part.

The Moral.

Dear friends, the father of these two brethren, betokeneth & Father of Heaven. And his two Sons betoken the nature of Angels, and the nature of Man : for Man was married with a common woman or harlot, when he ate the apple against the commandment of God ; wherefore he was exiled by the Father of Heaven, and put from the joys of Paradise. The Son of the common woman, betokeneth Mankind. This Knights Son, that

that is Adam, lived in great misery, for after his sin he was put from joy into this wretched valley of tears and weeping, according to the Scripture: *In the sweat of thy brows thou shalt eat thy bread.* But after by the passion of Christ he was reconciled. But the other son, that betokeneth the Devil, was ever unkind, & grugged daily against our reconciling, saying: That by reason of sin we ought not to come unto ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~heaven~~ ^{heaven}. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

We ought in every vocation and calling to behave our selves justly, and to use the poor man with equity: we must not injure rich men. The mighty men are to be honored, and not defrauded of their dignity and estate, being men of sincere life. They that do contrary to the meaning of dutiful behoof herein, are worthy of everlasting death.

The 38. History.

Sometime there dwelt in Rome a Mighty Emperor, named Donatus, which did make three Images, of the which one held out his hand straight unto the People, and had on his finger a ring of gold. The second Image had a beard of gold. And the third had a mantle of gold. Commanding upon pain of death, that no man should take away from these Images, the ring, the beard, nor the mantle.

It befell afterward upon a time, that one Dionysie a Tyrant, came into the Temple, and took away the Ring from the first Image, the beard from the second, and the mantle from the third. And when he had thus done, he was forthwith accused unto the Emperor, and brought before him, and strictly examined of that trespass, why he despoiled the Images against the Emperors commandment? Then answered Dionysie, and said as followeth: My reverend Lord, It is lawfull to answer for my self: When I entered into the Temple, the first Image held forth his hand straight to me, as who would say, I give thee this Ring: and therefore I took the ring as the gift of the Image, being loath to refuse so gentle an offer. And when I saw the second Image having a beard, I thought thus with my self, I knew sometime the father of the Image, which had no beard, and now his son hath a beard, which is against reason, the son to have a beard, and the father none: and therefore I took from him his beard, that he should be like his father. After that, when I saw the third having a mantle of gold, I thought that the mantle of gold was not behodiful for him in winter: for gold is naturally cold, which might be cause of his death, and therefore I took it from him, because it was too cold in winter, and too hot in Summer. When Dionysie had excused himself by these reasons, the Emperor answered, and said:

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Thou hast answered twickedly for thy self. What should cause thee rather then any other man, to dispoil the Images; forasmuch as I commanded that no man should take any thing away from them? Therefore thine own mouth hath condemned thee. Anon the Emperor called to him one of his Squires, and charged him to smite off his head: and incontinently he took him, and did unto him as the Emperor had commanded, and so he died a shamefull death.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth Almighty God, the Father of Heaven. The three Images betokeneth the poor men, the rich men, and the mighty Men of this world. The Tyrant *Dionys* betokeneth all Officers in every state, lewdly behaving themselves, which take away from poor Men the ring-off their fingers, & say thus: I may take it is given me. For when a poor man hath ought to do, he must needs put forth his hand to give, whether he wil or not, if he wold speed. They take away a beard from the rich Man, and say thus: This Man is richer than his Father was, therefore take we his Livelihood from him, and make him like his Fore-father. They take also the mantle of gold from the mighty Men, when they see any Man of honor and good living, willing to correct such open Misdoers: they say thus: This Man is too cold, for he inclineth nothing to our Opinions, and also he is too hot in power and working against us; therefore go we and take from him the Mantle of Might, and so they accuse him, and put him out of his Office. But certainly, all such Men stand in peril of everlasting death. From the which save us, he that shed his precious Blood for us. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Man ought to nourish Christ in his heart by faith, and fruits of good life. The reward of such as have care unto the Commandments and Institutions of God. We must watch, lest we fall into temptation: these things considered, we shal then by Gods gracious good providence attain unto the reward of heavenly and everlasting bleſs.

The 32. History.

THere dwelt sometime in Rome a Mighty Emperor, named *Emelius*, who had a fair Young Lady to his Wife, upon whom he had begotten a fair son. When the States of the Empire heard this, they came to the Emperor, and beloughe him to have the keeping of his son. Immediately the Emperor sent a Herald throughout the City, proclaiming, that in whole house were first found

found fire and water, the good-man of that house should have his son in keeping, and to nourish. And then the Emperour made a Proclamation, that whosoever had his son to keep, should nourish him cleanly, and feed him with wholesome meats and drinks. And when the child came to age, then should the Keeper be promoted to great honour: wherefore many men made ready fire and water, in hope to have the child. But in the night, when every man was asleep, there came a Tyrant, named Sulapious, that quenched the fire, and threw out the water. Nevertheless, among all other, there was a man named Jonathas, that labored so diligently, that he kept both day and night, fire and water.

In a morning early, the Herald at the Emperours commandment went through the City, and sought in every house for fire and water; but he could find none till he came to Jonathas house, where he found both fire and water ready, wherefore he was brought before the Emperour, who delivered him his son according to the Proclamation.

When Jonathas had the Emperours son, he led him home unto his house, and soon after he sent for Masons and Carpenters, and did make a strong chamber of lime and stone. And when the chamber was finished, he sent for Painters to paint on the wall of the chamber ten Images, with this Verse painted above their heads: Whoso defileth these Images, shall die a cruel death. And then caused a pair of Gallows to be drawn on the wall, and figured a man hanging thereupon, with this Verse painted above his head: So shall he be served that nourisheth the Emperours Son amiss. Also he caused a Chair of Gold to be made, and himself sitting therein, crowned with a crown of gold, with this superscription above the head: Whoso nourisheth the Emperours son cleanly, thus shall he be honored.

When this was done, Oftentimes as he was asleep, he was greatly tempted to defile these ten excellent Images; but anon he Read the Superscription above their heads, and then all the Temptations ceased. And when the Emperours son was wisely kept, then he went to the Gallows, and Read that Verse which was written above his own head, and for dread thereof, kept the child better, and was diligent to give attendance on him.

And when he beheld the Chair, and himself sitting therein, crowned with a crown of Gold, he was right joyful, thinking to have good reward for keeping of the Emperours son. When the Emperour heard of this diligent demeanor about his son, he sent for him, and thanking him for his well-keeping and nourishing of him, he after promoted him to great honor and dignity.

The Moral.

This Emperour betokeneth the Father of Heaven: the Emperess betokeneth the blessed Virgin Mary. The Emperours son betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. The Herald that was sent
throughout

throughout the City, betokeneth *S. John Baptist*, who was sent before our Lord to prepare the way to him, according to the holy Scripture : *Lo, I send mine Angel before me, &c.* The States that desired the Emperors son to nourish, betokens the Patriarchs and Prophets, which desire greatly to nourish our Lord Jesus Christ, and also to see him ; but they might not see him, nor nourish him : for fire and water, which should have been cause of their sight, was not with them perfectly. The fire betokeneth the holy Ghost, which had not yet appeared to them : for they were not washed with the water of baptism. Also ye may understand by the fire, perfect charity ; and by the water, true contrition, which do now a-days fail in many men, and therefore they may not have the little Child Jesus in their hearts.

Jonathas that watched so diligently, betokeneth every good Christian Man, which studieth ever to watch in well-doing, yeelding to God for sins the fire of charitable repentance, and the water of contrition. But oftentimes the Tyrant, which betokeneth the Devil, putteth out the fire of charity from out of mens hearts, and casteth out the water of contrition, so that they may not nourish the little Child Jesus. Therefore let us watch, as *Jonathas* did, that we enter not into temptation. And call we unto us *Masons*, that is, discreet Preachers, which can make in our hearts a chamber of stone ; that is, a sure Faith and Hope. Then call we unto us *Painters* ; that is, Ministers of Gods VVord, which can paint in our hearts ten Images ; that is, the ten Commandments : which if thou keep and observe dayly, without doubt thou shalt be honored in Heaven. And if thou keep well the Emperors son, thou shalt sit in a chair of gold, crowned with a crown of gold. And if that thou nourish him not well, without doubt thou shalt be in danger of torment in hell. From the which preserve us our blessed Savior Jesus.

T H E A R G U M E N T.

The soul of man espoused unto Christ, the flesh procureth the same to sin. The Christian soul by faith withstandeth temptation. The Redemption of mankind from sin and death. The deceits of unthankful hearts. The spirits health. The defects of the flesh. After a pure repentance followeth perpetual joy and felicity both of Soul and Body.

The

The 40. History.

IN Rome dwelt sometime a mighty Emperor, named Denelay, which had wedded the Kings daughter of Hungaria, a fair Lady and a gracious in all her works, and specially she was merciful. On a time as the Emperor lay in his bed, he bethought him that he would go visit the holy Land. And on the morrow he called to him the Emperess his wife, and his own only brother, and thus he said: Dear Lady, I may not, nor will not hide from you the privities of my heart: I purpose to visit the holy Land, wherefore I ordain thee principally to be Lady and Governess over all mine Empire, and all my people: and under thee I ordain here my brother to be thy Steward, for to provide all things that may be profitable to mine Empire, and to my people.

Then said the Emperess: Sith it will no othertwise be, but that needs thou wilt go visit the City of Jerusalem, I shal be in your abeience as true as any turtle that hath lost her mate: for as I believe, ye shall not escape thence with your life.

The Emperor anon comforted her with fair words, and kissed her, and after that took his leave of her and all others, and went toward the City of Jerusalem. And anon after the Emperor was gone, his brother became so proud, that he oppressed poor men, and robbed rich men: and he did worse then this, for he dayly stirred the Emperess to commit sin with him. But ever she answered again as an holy and devout woman, and said: I will, quoth she, never consent to you, nor to any other, as long as my Lord liveth. Nevertheless, this Knight would not leave with this answer, but ever when he found her alone, he made his complaint to her, and stirred her by all the ways that he could to sin with him.

When this Lady saw that he would not cease for any answer, nor would not amend himself: when she saw her time, she called to her three or four of the worthiest men of the Empire and said to them thus: It is not unknown to you, that my Lord the Emperor ordained me principal Governor of this Empire; and also he ordained his brother to be Steward under me, and that he should do nothing without my counsel, but he doth all the contrary: for he oppresseth greatly poor men, and likewise robbeth the rich men, and yet he would do more then this, if he might have his intent: wherefore I command you in my Lords name, that you bind him fast, and cast him into prison.

Then said they: Soothly, he hath done many evil deeds since our Lord the Emperor went, therefore we be ready to obey your commandment: but in this matter you must answer for us to our Lord the Emperor.

Then said she: Dread ye not, if my Lord knew what he had done, as well as I, he would put him to the foulest death that could be thought. Immediately these men laid hands on him, and bound him fast with iron chains, and put him in prison, whereas he lay

long time after : till at last it fortun'd, there came tidings that the Emperour was coming home, and had obtained great renown and victory. When his brother heard of his coming, he said : Would to God, my brother might not find me in prison : for if he do, he will enquire the cause of mine imprisonment of the emperess, and she will tell him all the truth, how I mov'd her to commit sin : and so for her I shal have no favor of my brother, but lose my life : this know I well, therefore it shall not be so. Then sent he a Messenger unto the Emperess, praying her that she would vouchsafe to come to the prison door, that he might speak a word or two with her.

The emperess came to him, and enquired of him, what he would have ? He answered, and said : O Lady, have mercy upon me : for if the Emperour my brother, find me in prison, then shal I die without any remedy.

Then said the Emperess : If I might know that thou wouldest be a good man, and leave thy folly, thou shouldest find grace. Then did he promise her assuredly to be true, and to amend all his trespasss. When he had thus promised, the Emperess delivered him anon, and made him to be bathed and shaven, and apparelled him worthily according to his state : and then she said unto him thus : Now, good brother, take thy steed and come with me, that we may meet my Lord. He answered, and said : Lady, I am ready to fulfill your will and commandment in all things. And then the emperess took him with her, and many other Knights, and so rode forth to meet with the emperour. And as they rode together by the way, they saw a great Hart run before them, wherefore every man with such hounds as they had, chased him on horse-back, so that with the emperess was left no creature, save only the emperours brother : who seeing that no man was there but they two, thus he said unto the Emperess : Lo, Lady, here is beside a private Forrest, and long it is ago that I spake to thee of love : come now and consent unto me that I may ly with thee.

Then said the Emperess : Ah! fool, what may this be ? Yesterday I delivered thee out of prison upon thy promise, in hope of amendment, and now thou art returned to thy folly again : wherefore I say now to thee, as I have said before, there shal no man do such thing with me, save only my Lord the Emperour, which ought of very duty for to do. Then said he : If thou wilt not consent to me, I shal hang thee here upon a tree in this Forrest, where no man shal find thee, and so shalt thou die an evil death. The Emperess answered meekly, and said : Though thou smitest off my head, or put me to death with all manner of torment, thou shalt never have my consent to such a sin.

When he heard this, he uncloathed her all save her smock, and hang'd her up by the hair upon a tree, and tyed her steed before her, and so rode to his fellows, and told them that a great host of men met him, and took the emperess away from him : and when he had told them this, they made all great sorrow. It

It befell on the third day after, there came an earl to hunt in that Forrest: and as he rode beating the bushes, he unkennels a fox, whom his hounds followed fast, till they came near the tree where the emperess hanged. And when the dogs smelt the savor of her, they left the fox, and ran toward the tree as fast as they could.

The earl seeing this, wondered greatly, and spurring his horse followed them till he came where the emperess hanged. When the earl saw her thus hanging, he marvelled greatly, for so much as she was right fair and beautiful to behold, wherefore he said unto her in this manner wise: O woman, who art thou: And of what Countrey? And wherefore hankest thou here in this manner:

The emperess that was not yet fully dead; but at point ready to die, answered and said: I am, quoth she, a strange woman, and am come out of a far Countrey; but how I came hither God knoweth. Then answered the earl, and said: Whose horse is this that standeth by thee bound to this tree? Then answered the Lady, and said: That it was hers. When the earl heard this, he saw well that she was a Gentlewoman, and come of noble lineage, wherefore he was the rather moved with pity, and said unto her: O fair Lady, thou seemest of gentle blood, and therefore I purpose to deliver thee from this mischief, if thou wilt go with me, and nourish my fair young daughter, & teach her at home in my Castle: for I have no child but only her: and if thou keep her well, thou shalt have a good reward for thy labor. Then said she: As far forth as I can do, or may, I shall fulfill your intent. And when she had thus promised him, he took her down off the tree, and led her home to his Castle, and gave her the keeping of his daughter that he loved so much: and she was cherished so well, that she lay every night in the earls chamber, and his daughter with her: and in the chamber every night there burned a lamp, which hanged between the emperesss bed and the earls bed. This Lady behaved her so gently, that she was beloved of every creature. There was at that time, in the earls house a Steward which much loved this emperess, and often spake to her of his love. But she answered him again, and said: Know ye, dear friend, for a certainty, that I will never love any man in such manner wise, but only him whom I am greatly bounden to love by Gods Commandement. Then said the Steward: Then thou wilt not consent unto me? Sir, quoth she, what need you any more to ask such things? The vow that I have made, I will truly keep and hold, by the grace of God. And when the Steward heard this, he went his way in great wrath and anger, thinking within himself: If I may, I shall be revenged on thee.

It befell upon a night within short time after, that the Earls Chamber door was left unshut, which the Steward had anon perceived: And when they were all asleep, he went and espied by the light of the lamp, where the Emperess and the young Maiden lay together, and with that he drew out his knife, and cut the

throat of the Earls Daughter, and put the bloody knife into the Emperesses hand, she being asleep, and nothing knowing thereof, to the intent that when the Earl awaked, he should see the knife in her hand, and that he should think that she had cut his daughters throat, and so he would be put to a shameful death for this Mischievous Deed. And when the Daniel was thus slain, and the bloody knife in the Emperess hand, the Countess awaked out of her sleep, and saw by the light of the lamp the bloody knife in the Emperess hand, wherefore she was almost out of her wits, and said to the Earl: O my Lord, behold in yonder Ladies hand a wonderful thing.

Then the Earl awaked, and looked toward the emperesses bed, and saw the bloody knife, as the Countess had said: wherefore he was greatly moved, and cryed to her, and said: Awake, woman, out of thy sleep: what thing is this that I see in thy hand? Then the emperess through his cry awaked out of her sleep; and in her waking the knife fell out of her hand: and with that she looked by her, and found the earls daughter dead by her side, and all the bed besprinkled with blood; wherefore with an High voyce she cryed, and said: Alace, alace, and too is me, my Lords daughter is slain.

Then cryed the Countess unto the Earl with a pitious voyce, and said: O my Lord, let this devilish woman be put to the foulest death that can be thought, which thus hath slain our only child.

Then when the Countess had said thus to the earl, he said to the Emperess in this wise: The high God knoweth that thou, mischievous woman, hast slain my daughter with thine own hands: for I saw the bloody knife in thy hand, and therefore thou shalt die a foul death. Then said the earl in this wise: O thou woman, were it not I dread God greatly, I would cleave thy body with my sword in two parts: for I delivered thee from hanging, and now thou hast slain my daughter, nevertheless, for me thou shalt have no harm, therefore go thy way out of this City, without any delay: for if I find thee here after this day, thou shalt die a most cruel death.

Then arose this woful Emperess, and put on her cloaths, and after leapt on her palfrey, and rode toward the east alone, without any safe conduit: and as she rode thus mourning by the way, she espied on the left side of the way a pair of Gallows, and seven officers leading a man to the Gallows to be hanged: wherefore she was moved with great pity, and smote her horse with her stick, and rode to them, praying them that she might redeem that misdoer, if he might be saved from death by any means.

Then said they: Lady, it pleaseth us well that you redeem him. Among the Emperess accorded with them, and payed his ransom, and he was delivered.

Then said she to him: Now, my good friend, be true unto me till thou die, sith I have delivered thee from death.

On my soul, quoth he, I promise you ever to be true. And when he had thus said, he followed the Lady still, till they came nigh a City, and then said the empress to him: Good friend, quoth she, go forth thy way afore me into the City, and let thou take up for us an honest Lodging, for there I purpose to rest a while. Her man went forth as she commanded, and took up for her a good Lodging, and an honest, where she abode a long time. When the men of the City perceived her Beauty, they wondered greatly, wherefore many of them craved of her unlawfull love; but all was in vain, for they might not spee in any wise.

It fortuned after upon a day, that there came a Ship full of Merchandise, and arrived in the haven of that City. When the Lady heard this, she said unto her servant: Go to the ship, and see if there be any cloath there for my use. Her servant went forth to the ship, whereas he found very many fine cloaths: wherefore he prayed the Master of the ship, that he would come into the City and speak with his Lady. The Master granted him, and so the servant came home to his Lady before, and warned her of the coming of the Master of the Ship. Soon after the Master of the ship came and saluted the Lady courteously: and the Lady received him according to his degree, praying him that he might have for her money such cloaths as might be profitable for her wearing. Then he granted that she should have any that liked her, and soon they were agreed: wherefore the servant went immediately again with the Master of the ship for the cloath. And when they were both within on ship-board, the Master said to the Ladies servant: My dear friend, to thee I would open my mind, if I might trust to thee: and if thou help me, thou shalt have of me a great reward. Then answered he, and said: I shall, quoth he, be sworn to thee to keep thy counsel, and fulfill thine intent as far forth as I can. Then said the Master of the ship: I love thy Lady more then I can tell thee, for her beauty and feature is so excellent, that I would give for the love of her all the gold that I have: And if I may obtain the love of her through thy help, I will give thee whatsoever thou wilt desire of me. Then said the Ladies servant: Tell me by what means I may best help thee: Then said the Master of the ship: Go home to thy Lady again, and tell her, that I will not deliver to thee the cloath, except she come her self: and do thou but bring her to my ship, and if the wind be good and fit, then I purpose to lead her away. Thy counsel is good, quoth the Ladies servant, therefore give me some reward, and I shall fulfill thy desire.

Now when he had received his reward, he went again to the Lady, and told her, that by no means the Master of the ship would deliver him the cloath, except she came her self.

The Lady believed her servant, and went to the ship. Now when she was within the ship-board, her servant abode without. When the Master saw that she was within the ship, and the wind was

was good, he drete up the sail, and sailed forth. When the Lady perceived this, thus she said to the Vaster: O Vaster, quoth she, what reason is this that thou hast done to me? The Vaster answered, and said: Adam, certainly it is so, that I must needs ly with thee, and afterwards espouse thee. O good Sir, quoth she, I have made a vow, & I will never do such thing but with him unto whom I am bound by righe, and by þe Law. Sochly, quoth he, if you will not grant me with your good will, I will cast you out into the midst of the sea, and there shall ye die an evil death. If it be so quoth she, that I must needs consent, or else die; first, I pray thee, to prepare a private place in the end of the ship, whereas I may fulfill thine intent ere I die: and also, I pray thee, that I may say my prayers unto the Father of Heaven, that he may have mercy on me.

The Vaster believed her, wherefore he did ordain her a Cabinnet in the end of the ship, wherein she kneeled down on both her knees and made her prayers, saying on this wise: O thou, my Lord God, thou hast kept me from my youth in cleanness, keep me now that I be not defoured, so that I may ever serve thee with a clean heart and mind: and let not this wicked man prevail with me, nor any other the like wickedness come nigh me. When she had ended her prayers, there arose suddenly a great tempest in the sea, so that the ship burst all to pieces, and all that were therein perished, save the Lady: and she caught a cable and saved her self, and the Vaster caught a board of the ship, and saved himself likewise: nevertheless she knew not of him, nor he of her, for they were driven to divers coasts. The Lady landed in her own Empire near a rich City, where she was honourably received: and she lived so holy a life, that God gave her grace and power to heal sick folks of all manner of diseases; wherefore there came much people to her, both crooked, blind and lame, and every man through the grace of God, and her good endeavour, was healed, wherefore her name was known through divers Regions. Nevertheless, she was not known as the Empress.

At the same time the Emperors brother (that had hanged her before by the hair) was smitten with a foul leprosy. The Knight that slew the Emperors Daugheer, and put the bloody knife in her hand, was blind, deaf, and had the palsy. The chief that betrayed her to the Vaster of the ship, was lame, and full of the Cramp. And the Vaster of the ship, distraught out of his wits.

When the Emperor heard that so holy a woman was in that City, he called his brother, and said to him thus: Go now, dear brother, unto this holy woman that is dwelling in this City, that she may heal thee of thy leprosy. Would to God, O noble brother, quoth he, that I were healed. Anon the Emperor with his brother went towards the City. Then when the Citizens heard of his coming, they received him honourably with Hosanna, and all prohibition sitting his Estate. And then the Emperor enquired of the

the Citizens, if any such holy Woman were among them, that could heal sick folks of their diseases? The Citizens answered, and said: That such a one there was. Now at the same time was come to the same City, the Knight which slew the Earls daughter, and the thief which he saved from the gallows, and the Painter of the ship to be healed of their diseases. Then was the Empress called forth before the Emperor, but she muffled her face as well as she could, that the Emperor her husband should not know her: and when she had so done, she saluted him with great reverence, as appertained to his state, and he again in like manner, saying thus: O good Lady, if thou list of thy kindness to heal my brother of his leprosy, ask of me what you will, and I shall grant it thee for thy reward.

When the Empress heard this, she looked about her, and saw there the Emperors brother a foul leper: She saw there also the Knight that slew the Earls daughter, blind and deaf: the thief that he saved from the gallows, lame: and also the Painter of the ship distraught out of his wits, and all were come to her to be healed of their maladies, and knew her not; but though they knew her not, she knew them well. Then said she unto the Emperor thus: My reverend Lord, though you would give me all your Empire, I cannot heal your brother, nor none of these other, except they acknowledge openly what great evil they have done.

When the Emperor heard this, he turned him towards his brother, and said unto him: Brother, acknowledge openly thy sin before all those men, that thou mayest be healed of thy sickness. Then anon he began to tell how he had led his life: but he told not how he had hanged the Empress in the Forrest by the hair of the head most despitefully.

When he had acknowledged all that him list, the Empress replied, and said: Soothly, my Lord, I would gladly lay unto him my Medicine; But I tooke right well it is in vain, for he hath not made a full confession. The Emperor hearing this, he turned toward his brother, and said in this wise: What evil sorrow, or other unhappy wretchedness is in thee: seest thou not how thou art a foul leper? Therefore acknowledge thy sin truly, that thou mayest be whole, or else avoid my company for evermore. Ah! my Lord, quoth he, I may not tell my life openly, except I be sure of thy grace. What hast thou trespassed against me? said the Emperor. Then answered his brother, and said: Mine offence against thee is grievous, and therefore I ask thee heartily forgiveness. The Emperor thought not on the Empress, forasmuch as he supposed she had been dead many years before: therefore he commanded his brother to tell forth wherein he had offended him, and he should be forgiven.

When the Emperor had thus forgiven his brother, he began to tell openly how he had desired the Empress to commit Adultery with her; and because she denied, he had hanged her by the hair in the Forrest, on such a day.

When

When the Emperour heard this, he was almost beside himself, and in his Rage he said thus: O thou wretched Creature, the vengeance of God is fallen upon thee: and wert it not that I have pardoned thee, thou shouldst die the most shameful death that could be thought.

Then said the Knight that slew the Earls daughter: I wot not, quoth he, what Lady you mean; but I wot that my Lord found on a time such a Lady hanging by the hair in the Forrest, and brought her home to his Castle, and he took her his daughter to keep, and I provoked her, as much as I could, to sin with me, but she would in no wise consent to me, wherefore I slew the earls daughter that lay with her: and when I had so done, I put the bloody knife in the Ladies hand, that the earl should think she had slain his Daughter with her own hand, and then was she exiled thence: but where she became, I wot not. Then said the chief: I wot not of what Lady ye mean: but well I wot, that seven officers were leading me to the gallows, and such a Lady came riding by, and bought me off them, and then went I with her, and afterward I betrayed her unto the Master of the ship. Such a Lady, quoth the Master of the ship, received I, and when we were in the midst of the sea, I would have lye with her; but she knelled down to her prayers, and anon there arose such a tempest, that the ship burst all in pieces, and all therein were drowned, save she and I: but afterward what befell of her, I wot not.

Then cryed the Emperess with a loud voice, and said: Soothly, dear friends, ye do now truly confesse and declare the truth, wherefore I will now apply my medicine: and anon they received their healths. When this Lady the Emperess had thus done, she uncovered her face to the emperour, and he forthwith knew her, and ran to her, and embraced her in his arms, and kissed her oftentimes, and for joy he wept bitterly, saying: Blessed be God, now I have found that I desired. And when he had thus said, he led her home to the Palace with great joy: and after, when it pleased Almighty God, they ended both their lives in peace and rest.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ. This Emperess betokeneth a holy soul: this Emperours brother betokens the flesh, to whom our Lord hath given charge of the Empire, but most principally to the soul. Nevertheless, the wretched flesh oft provoketh the soul to sin: but the soul that loveth God above all things, withstandeth that temptation, calleth to her ghostly power; that is, Reason, Will, Understanding, and Conscience, and maketh them to imprison the flesh; that is, disobedient to the soul, in the prison of true repentance, unto the time it obey reason in all things. And thus

thus in hope of mercy he sianeth again, to whom the holy Writer saith : Cursed be the man that sinneth in hope. And at the last the soul inclineth to the flesh, and letteth him out of the prison of Repentance, and washeth him from the filth of sin, and arrayeth him with good vertues, and maketh him leap on the palfrey of charitable humility, and so rideth forth to meet our Lord with the sacrifice of thanksgiving. But alice, oft the sinner trespasseth against holy Scripture : wherefore the Hart ; that is, the lust of the flesh, ariseth before him, and after runneth great hounds ; that is, evil thoughts : and so long they chase, till the body and the soul be left alone, and then the flesh stirreth that pure soul, being the Spouse to Almighty God ; but the pure and undefiled soul that is so well beloved with God, will not forsake our Lord, and consent to sin : wherefore the wretched flesh full oft dispoileth her of her cloathing ; that is, of all her vertues, and hangeth her up by the hair on an oak ; that is, on lusts and delights ; and there she hangeth till the good Earl cometh ; that is, a discreet Preacher in the Forrest of this world, to preach and teach the Word of God : then he taketh her down, and leadeth her forth to the Church, to nourish his daughter ; that is, to nourish conscience with fruitful faith. The Earl had in his chamber a lamp : right so every discreet Preacher should have before him the lamp of holy Scripture, whereby he may see both the grievance and profit of the soul in learning of vertues, and putting away of vice. The Steward that stirreth her to sin, is nought else but pride of life, which is Steward of this world, by whom many men be deceived. But when the soul that is so well beloved with Christ, will not consent unto the sin of pride, then taketh this evil Steward the knife of covetise, wherewith he slayeth the Earls daughter ; that is, conscience, according to the Scripture, saying : *Gold and silver hath blinded the eyes of Judges, and hath overthrown wise men, so that equity and righteousness might not enter, but stood afar, and turned their backs.* This Lady also redeemed a man from death ; that is, from everlasting death, which he had deserved by deadly sin. Therefore do we as this Lady, smite we our horse ; that is, our flesh, with the spurs of repentance, and so ride we forth in all haste to save our neighbor from the snare of deadly sin, to help him both bodily and ghostly, as Solomon saith : *Wo be to that man lying in deadly sin, that hath no man to lift him out thereof :*

N

Therefore

Therefore awake thy neighbor, and help him. *For a brother that is holpen of another, is like a sure City: and if he give but a cup of cold water in the way of help, he shall not lose his reward.* But many now a-days be very unkind, as was the thief which deceived the Lady, after that she had saved him from hanging.

The Master of the ship betokeneth the world, by whom many men be deceived. But nevertheless, as oft as a man taketh on him voluntarily the charge of charity, and obeyeth unto the Commandements of God, and forsaketh the world, then breaketh he the ship. For it is impossible to please God and man, and the world, all at one time.

VWhen this Lady had escaped the tempest of the sea, she went to a City; that is, the soul after the troubles of this world, went to the holy life, and there she healed all manner of sick folk; that is, every man that is troubled in his soul; that is, infected with divers sicknesses, those this Lady healed through holy life. But they could not be healed till they had first confessed their sins unto the Empress, the Church of God, and then she healeth them by repentance and amendment of life: yet all this while was the Empress unknown to her husband, that is, the Church wandereth in the wilderness of this wicked world, untill God by miraculous means made her known unto him, and so led her home by victory and triumph in the truth, unto the heavenly habitation of eternal rest and glory. Unto the which Almighty God bring us all for his Sons sake. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Every supream Magistrat, and other inferior, is to be honored and revered. Every true Christian man ought to consider his duty herein. And every false Christian perverting the ways of the godly, the reward of such is laid up in Hell; but the just shall inherit the blessed life everlasting.

The 41. History.

IN Rome sometime dwelt a mighty Emperour, named Martin, which for entire affection kept with him his brothers son, whom men called Fulgentius. With this Martin dwelt also a knight that was Steward of the Empire, and uncle unto the Emperour, which envied this Fulgentius, studying day and night how he might bring the Emperour and this youth at debate. Wherefore the Steward on a day went to the Emperour, and said: *My Lord, quoth he, I that am your true servant, am bound in duty to warn your Highness, if I hear any thing that toucheth your Honor; wherefore I have such things that I must needs utter it in secret*

to

to your Majesty between us two. Then said the Emperor: Good friend, lay on what thee list. My most dear Lord, quoth the Steward, Fulgentius your Cousin, and your nigh kinsman, hath defamed you wonderfully and shamefully throughout all your Empire; saying, that your breath stinketh, and that it is death to him to serve you your cup. Then the Emperor was grievously displeased, and almost belide himself for anger, and said unto him thus; I pray thee, good friend, tell me the very truth, if that my breath stinketh, as he saith. My Lord, quoth the Steward, ye may believe me, I never perceived a sweeter breath in my days then yours is. Then said the Emperor: I pray thee, good friend, tell me how I may bring this thing to good proof. The Steward answered, and said: My Lord, quoth he, ye shall right well understand the truth, for to morrow next when he serveth you of your cup, ye shall see that he will turn away his face from you, because of your breath: and this is the most certain proof that may be had of this thing. Verily, quoth the Emperor, a truer proof cannot be had of this thing. Therefore anon when the Steward heard this, he went straight to Fulgentius, and took him aside, saying thus: Dear friend, thou art near Kinsman, and Nephew unto my Lord the Emperor: therefore if thou wilt be thankfull unto me, I will tell thee of a fault whereof my Lord the Emperor complaineth oft, and thinketh to put thee from him (except it be sooner amended) and that will be a great reproof to thee. Then said this Fulgentius: Ah, good Sir, for his love that died upon the Cross, tell me why my Lord is so sore moved with me; for I am ready to amend my fault in all that I can or may, and for to be ruled by your discreet counsel.

Thy breath, quoth the Steward, stinketh so sore, that his drink doth him no good, so grievous unto him is the stinking breath of thy mouth. Then said Fulgentius unto the Steward: Truly, that perceived I never till now: but what think you of my breath? I pray you tell me the very truth. Truly, quoth the Steward, it stinketh greatly and foul. And this Fulgentius believed all that he said, and was right sorrowfull in his mind, and prayed the Steward of his counsel and help in this woeful case. Then said the Steward unto him: If thou wilt do my counsel, I shall bring this matter to a good conclusion: therefore do as I shall tell thee. I counsel thee for the best, and also warn thee, that when thou servest my Lord the Emperor of his cup, that thou turn thy face away from him, so that he may not smell thy stinking breath, untill the time that thou hast provided thee of some remedy therefore. Then was Fulgentius right glad, and swore to him that he would do by his counsel. Not long after, it befell that this young man Fulgentius served his Lord as he was wont to do, and therewith suddenly he turned his face from his Lord the Emperor, as the Steward had taught him. And when the Emperor perceived the avoiding of his head, he smote this young man Fulgentius on the

breast with his foot, and said to him thus: O thou lewd Carlet, now I see well it is true that I have heard of thee, and therefore go thou anon out of my sight, that I may see thee no more in this place. And with that this young Fulgentius wept full sore, and avoided the place, and went out of his sight. And when this was done, the Emperor called unto him his Steward, and said: How may I rid this Carlet from the world, that thus hath defamed me? By most dear Lord, quoth the Steward, right well you shall have your intent: for here beside, within these three miles, ye have brick-makers, which dayly make great fire to burn brick, and also they make lime, therefore, my Lord, send to them this night, charge them upon pain of death, that whosoever cometh to them first in the morning, saying to them thus: By Lord commandeth them to fulfill his will: that they take him, and cast him into the furnace, and burn him: and this night command you this Fulgentius, that he go early in the morning to your work-men, and that he ask them, whether they have fulfilled your will which they were commanded, or not? And then shall they, according to your commandment, cast him into the fire, and thus shall he die an evil death. Surely, quoth the Emperor, thy counsel is good, therefore call to me that Carlet Fulgentius. And when the young man was come to the Emperors presence, he said to him thus: I charge thee upon pain of death, that thou rise early in the morning, and go to the burners of lime and brick, and that thou be with them early before the Sun rise, three miles from this house, and charge them in my behalf, that they fulfill my commandment, or else they shall die a most shameful death. Then spake this Fulgentius: By Lord, if God send me my life, I shall fulfill your will, were it that I should go to the worlds end.

When Fulgentius had this charge, he could not sleep for thought, that he must arise early for to fulfill his Lords commandment. The Emperor about midnight sent a Messenger on horse-back unto his brick-makers, commanding them upon pain of death, that whosoever came to them first in the morning, saying unto them (as is before rehearsed) they should take him and bind him, and cast him into the fire, and burn him to the bare bones. The brick-makers answered, and said, It should be done. Then the Messenger returned home again, and told the Emperor that his commandment should be fulfilled. Early in the morning following Fulgentius arose, and prepared him towards his way: and as he went, he heard a bell ring to service, wherefore he went to hear service: and after the end of the service, he fell asleep, and there he slept a long time, so soundly, that the Priest nor none other might awake him. The Steward desiring inwardly to hear of his death, about two of the clock he went unto the work-men, and said unto them thus: Sirs, quoth he, have ye done the Emperors commandment, or not? The brick-makers answered him, and said: No, truly, we have not yet done his commandment, but it shall

that be done: and with that they laid hands on him. Then cryed the Steward, and said: Good Sirs, save my life, for the Emperour commanded that Fulgentius should be put to death. Then said they: The Challenger told us not so; but he bade us that whosoever came first to us in the morning, laying as you have said, that we should take him, and cast him into the furnace, and burn him to ashes: and with that they threw him into the fire. And when he was burnt, Fulgentius came to them, and said: Good Sirs, have you done my Lords commandment? Yea, soothly, said they: and therefore go ye again to the Emperour, and tell him so. Then said Fulgentius: For Christs love, tell me that commandment. We had in commandment, said they, upon pain of death, that whosoever came to us first in morning, and said like as thou hast said, that we should take him and cast him into the furnace: but before thee came the Steward, and therefore have we fulfilled in him the Emperours commandment: now he is burnt to the bare bones. When Fulgentius heard this, he thanked God, that he had so preserved him from death: therefore he took his leave of the work-men, and went again to the Palace. When the Emperour saw him, he was almost distract of his wits for anger, and thus he said: Hast thou been with the brick-makers, and fulfilled my commandment? Soothly, my gracious Lord, I have been there: but ere I came there, your commandment was fulfilled. Now may that be true? quoth the Emperour. Forsooth said Fulgentius, the Steward came to them afore me, and said that I should have said: so they took him, and threw him into the furnace: and if I had come any sooner, so would they have done to me: and therefore I thank God that hath preserved me from death. Then said the Emperour: Tell me the truth of such questions as I shall demand thee. Then said Fulgentius to the Emperour: You never found in me any falshood: and therefore I greatly wonder why ye have ordained such a death for me: for well ye know that I am your own brothers son. Then said the Emperour to Fulgentius: It is no wonder, for that death I ordained for thee through counsel of the Steward, because thou didst defame me throughout all my Empire, saying, That my breath did stink so grievously, that it was death to thee: and in token thereof, thou turnedst away thy face when thou servedst me of my cup: and that I saw with mine eyes: and for this cause I ordained for thee such a death, and yet thou shalt die, except I hear a better excuse.

Then answered Fulgentius, and said: Ah, dear Lord, if it might please your Highness for to hear me, I shall shew you a subtil and deceitful imagination. Say on, quoth the Emperour. The Steward, quoth Fulgentius, that is now dead, came to me, and said, that ye told unto him that my breath did stink, and thereupon he counselled me, that when I served you of your cup, I should turn away my face: I take God to witness, I lie not. When the Emperour heard this, he believed him, and said: O my Nephew,

now

now I see through the right wise iudgement of God, the Steward is burnt, and his own wickedness and envy is fallen on himself: for he ordained this malice against thee, and therefore thou art much bound to Almighty God, that hath preserved thee from death.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor betokeneth every supream Magistrat: and *Fulgentius* his Nephew, betokeneth every true Christian man, which should truly serve them with faithful loyalty, like as *Fulgentius* served the Emperor at his cup, wherefore he shall be greatly loved of God. This Steward betokeneth every false Christian man, as *Cain*, which oftentimes turneth the heart of right wise men from God; saying, that his breath stinketh; that is, that the life of this Magistrat is not acceptable to God or man, which is against the Scripture, which saith: *Jud. e. not, and ye shall not be judged.* But oftentimes such malicious people accuse righteous men, wherefore they shall be cast into the everlasting fire of Hell, where is wailing, weeping, and misery without end. But the righteous shall ascend to everlasting life. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

Tyrants and ungodly persons walk without knowledge of the truth, till they come to the Church of God. The wicked persecute the godly: but as they are preserved by the mighty providence of God, so they ought not to sleep in sin. A figurative speech of three several meanings, viz. Take, Teeld, and Flee. The signification thereof.

The 42. History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Delphinus, which had no children, save only a daughter which was a fair creature, & well beloved of her father. As this Emperor rode on a day a hunting in the Forrest, suddenly he rode out of his way, and lost his men, wherefore he was greatly discomfited, for he wist not whether he rode, nor in what place he was: till at the last when he had thus ridden all the day alone, in the evening he saw a house, and thither he rode a great pace, and knocked at the gate: immediately the good-man of the house heard him, and asked the cause of his knocking, and what he would have? Dear friend, quoth the Emperor, lo, it is night, as ye may see: therefore I desire of you lodging, for the love of God. When he had thus said, the good-man of the house (unawares that he was the Emperor) answered, and said: Good friend, quoth he, I am the Emperors Forrester, and have plenty of venison, and other victual for you.

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When the Emperor heard this, he was right glad in his mind; nevertheless, he told him not that he was the Emperor. Then the Forester opened the gate, and received him as kindly as he could, and set him to supper, and served him worthily. And when he had supped, the Forester brought him to his chamber, and when time was he went to bed. In the same night, it befell that the Foresters wife did travel of child in another chamber hard by, and was delivered the same night of a goodly son. And as the Emperor lay in his bed sleeping, him seemed he heard a voyce, saying to him thrice these words: Take, take, take. And with that he awoke, and marvelled greatly what it might be, saying to himself thus: A voyce biddeth me, Take, take, take. What shall I take? And immediately he fell asleep again. And the second time he heard a voyce saying unto him these words: Yeld, yeld, yeld. And with that he awakened again, and wondered greatly, saying unto himself: What may this signifie? First, I heard a voyce that said: Take, take, take, and nothing I received: and right now I heard another voyce that said: Yeld, yeld, yeld. What should I yeld? And as he lay thus thinking to himself, he fell asleep again, and then he heard the third voyce, saying these words thrice: Flee, flee, flee: for this night is a child born, that after thy decease shall be emperor. When the emperor heard this, he awakened, and wondered greatly what it might be. In the morrow following, the emperor called to him the Forester, and said: Dear friend, I pray tell me if any child be born here about this night, to thy knowledge? By wife, quoth the Forester, this night is delivered of a son. I pray thee, said the emperor, shew me thy son. When the emperor had seen the child, he saw a mark in the childs visage, whereby he might know him at another time: and he said to the Forester thus: Dear friend, knowest thou who I am? Nay worthly, quoth the Forester, for I never saw you before this time, as far as I can remember; nevertheless, it seemeth that ye be a Gentleman. Then answered the emperor, and said: I am the emperor your Lord, whom you have lodged this night: wherefore I give thee hearty thanks. This hearing the Forester, he fell down upon both his knees at his feet, and besought him of mercy, if that he had offended his Highness in any thing. Then answered the emperor, and said: Be thou nothing afraid: for I thank thee heartily for thy good cheer: and thy son that was born to night, I will have to bring up in my Court, and shortly I will send for him. O my gracious Lord, quoth the Forester, it is not fit that such a noble emperor should nourish the child of his subject and servant: nevertheless, your will be fulfilled: and when your Messengers come, I shall deliver them my son.

Then the Emperor took his leave, and rode home to his Palace: and shortly after he was come home, he called unto him such servants as he trusted best, and said to them thus: Go ye unto my Forester, with whom I was lodged such a night, and receive of him

him his son, of which his wife was delivered that night; and upon pain of death, I command you that ye slay him by the way, and cast his flesh to the dogs, but bring you the heart to me: and except ye fulfill my commandment, ye shall die the cruellest death that can be thought. Anon his servants went to the Forrest, and received the Forresters son, and brought him with them: and when they were come near unto the Palace, one of them said: How shall we do that we may fulfill our Lords commandment in slaying of this child? Some answered, and said: That the child should be slain, and some would have his life saved: and when they were thus striving among themselves, one of them that was most merciful, said unto the rest: O my good loving friends, hear my counsel, I beseech you, and ye shall not repent you thereof. If we murder this innocent child, we shall greatly offend Almighty God: And behold, hereby are young pigs, kill we one of them, and then may we take with us his heart, and present it unto the Emperor, saying: That it is the heart of the young child. Then said they: Thy counsel is good: but what shall we do with the child? Good friends, quoth he, let us wrap him in some cloaths, and lay him in some hollow tree, for peradventure God will help him, and save his life. When he had thus said, they did after his counsel in all things, and killed a pig, and went their way, and carried home with them the pigs heart to the Emperor, saying unto him thus: Lo, gracious Lord, we have destroyed the child, as ye commanded us: and with that they shewed him the pigs heart. The Emperor supposing it had been the childs heart, took it, and cast it into the fire despightfully, saying: Lo, there is the heart of him which should have been Emperor after me. Lo, what it is to believe in dreams, which be but fantasies, and vain things.

The same day after the child was put into the hollow tree, there came an Earl to hunt in the Forrest: and as his hounds chased an Hart, they came to the hollow tree where the child lay, and when they smelt the favor of the child, they would go no further. The Earl seeing this, marvelled why his hounds abode there, and smote his horse with his spurs, he rode a great pace till he came unto them. And when he came unto the tree wherein the child was laid, he looked in at a hole, and saw the child lying, and then he was right glad, and took the child up in his arms full lovingly, and bare it home to his Castle, saying unto the Countess his wife: Lo my dear wife, this day by fortune I have found a very fair child in an hollow tree, as I hunted in the Forrest, whereof I am right glad: And because thou never yet conceivedst a child, therefore I exhort thee that thou wilt feign thy self to travel with child, and say that thou hast born this child. The Countess fulfilled gladly the Earls desire, and said: My most dear Lord, your will in this thing shall be done. Not long after this, news went throughout all the Countrey, that the Countess was delivered of a fair son, wherefore every man rejoiced much.

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The child began to grow, and was well-belov'd of every man, and especially of the Earl and the Countess. It befell when the child was fifteen years of age, the Emperour made a solemn feast unto all the Lords of his Empire, unto the which feast this Earl was called, who at the day assigned came, and brought his son with him, which was at that time a fair young Squire, and he carv'd at the board before the Earl. The Emperour stedfastly beheld him, and espied the token in his fore-head, which he had seen before in the forresters house, wherewith he was greatly moved within himself, and said unto the Earl in this manner: Whose son is this? Certes, said the Earl, he is my son. Then said the Emperour: By the faith that thou owest to me, tell me the truth.

The Earl seeing that he might not excuse himself, but that needs he must tell him the truth, told him, he found him in a hollow tree; this hearing y^e emperour, he was almost distract of his wits for anger, and called to him his servants, which he had sent before to destroy y^e child. And when they came before him, he made them to sweare that they should tell him the truth what they had done with the child.

Gracious Lord, said they, we peid us unto your Grace and goodnes, for pittie so moved us, that we might not destroy him, but we put him in a hollow tree: what befell of him afterward, certainly we know not: and in his stead we killed a Pig, and brought the heart thereof to you.

When the Emperour had heard the truth of the matter, he said unto the Earl: This young man, quoth he, shall abide with me. The earl immediarly granted, though it was greatly against his will. When the feast was ended, every man took his leave of the Emperour, and went wherwas they list. And at that time it fortun'd that the Empress and her daughter sojourn'd in another Countrey far from thence, by the commandment of the Emperour.

Not long after, the emperour said unto this young Squire: It behoveth thee to ride unto the Empress my wife with my letters. I am ready at your commandment, my Lord, said he, to fulfill your desire. Immediatly the Emperour wrote letters, the intent whereof was this, that the Empress should take the bearer of these letters, and let him be drawn at the horse tail, and after that he should let him be hanged till he were dead, and that on pain of death. When the letters were all sealed, the Emperour gave them unto the young Squire, Commanding him to sped him on his Journey: And straightway the young Squire put them close into a Box, and rode forth on his journey. When he had ridden three or four days on his journey, in an evening he came unto a Castle where dwelt a Knight, and gently desired of him a nights lodging. The knight beholding the sweet favor of the young Squire, made him good chear, and afterward brought him into his chamber: and when he was there, he went to bed, and immediatly fell asleep for he was full weary of his journey, and forgot his Box with the letters lying openly in his Chamber.

When the Knight saw the Box, he opened it, and found letters sealed with the emperors sign manual, and was greatly tempted to open them: and at the last he opened them neatly and then read hoto the emperess upon pain of death, should put the bearer of them to death: and then he was right sorrowful, and said within himself: Alace, quoth he, it is great pity to slay so fair and proper a man: and immediately after the Knight rayed out that writing, and wrote in the same place these words following: Upon pain of death, I command thee, that thou take this young Squire, bearer of these letters, and let him be wedded without delay unto my Daughter and yours, with all the honor and solemnity that can be thought: and when they be married, that ye make as much account of him, as if he were your own son, and that he supply my room, till I come unto you my self. When the Knight had thus written, he closed the letters neatly, and put them into the box again. Early in the morning the young Squire arose, and very hastily made ready and took his leave of the Knight, and rode forth on his journey: and the third day after he came unto the emperess, and saluted her dutifully in the emperors behalf, and gave her the letters. When the emperess had read them, anon she sent forth her Messengers throughout y^e countrey, commanding the States and Gentleman to come to her daughters wedding on a day assigned.

When the day was come, thither came many great Lords and Ladies, and anon the young Squire espoused the emperors daughter with great honor, according to the tenor of the letters, and was much honored among the people. Not long after, it befell that the emperor came into that countrey, and when the emperess heard of his coming, she took with her her son in law with much other people, and went to welcome the emperor. When the emperor saw this young Squire leading the Lady his wife, he was greatly moved within himself, and said: O thou cursed woman, because thou hast not fulfilled my commandment, thou shalt die an evil death. O my dear Lord, quoth she, all that you commanded me, to do, I have fulfilled. Nay, cursed woman, said the emperor, it is not so: for I wrote to thee that thou shouldst put him to death, and yet he is alive. My Lord, quoth the emperess, you wrote to me that I should give him your Daughter to wife, and that on pain of death, in witness hereof, so, here your letters sealed with your own Seal manual. When the emperor saw this, he wondered greatly, and said: Is he then espoused to my daughter? Yes, surely, said the emperess, long ago, with great solemnity: and as I perceive, your daughter is with child. Then said the emperor: O Lord Jesus, it is great folly to strive against thine ordinance: therefore sith it is so, thy will must needs be fulfilled. And with that he took his son in law in his arms, and kissed him which after his death was Emperor, and ended his Life in rest and peace.

The Moral.

This Emperor may betoken *Herod*, who would have slain the Child Jesus, wherefore he sent Messengers to seek him, according to the Scripture, showing how he commanded three Kings to seek him, and bring him tydings again where he was, that he might come and worship him also. The Forrester betokeneth *Joseph* our Ladies husband, which kept him : but when the three Kings came, they slew him not, but worshipped him on their knees, and left him in the hollow tree of the God-head. The Earl that found this Child, betokeneth the Holy Ghost, which warned *Joseph* by the Angel in his sleep, that he should take our Lady and her Son and flee into *Egypt*.

By the first *take*, may be understood the great benefit that he gave thee, when he gave thee a soul made to his own similitude. By the second *take*, is understood the Son of God, which was born of the blessed Virgin *Mary*. By the third *take*, is understood the same Son of God which died upon the Cross.

By the first *yeeld*, is understood that we ought to yeeld our soul unto Almighty God, as clean as he gave us it after our Regeneration in Baptism. By the second *yeeld*, that we ought to yeeld honor, worship, and love unto Almighty God, and man. By the third *yeeld*, that we ought to yeeld to God true confession of faith, contrition of heart, and amendment of life. The first *flee*, betokeneth sin, which we should flee. The second *flee*, betokeneth the world, which we should flee, for the great temptations that are therein. The third *flee*, betokeneth everlasting pain, the which we ought to flee through faith, by the which we may come to everlasting blefs. Unto the which bring us our Lord Jesus. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Soul of Man being ravished by the tyranny of sin, she complaineth unto Christ, which heareth her. The Tyrant is overcome by Christ, who espouseth her unto him, preparing a place of perpetual joy for her. Christ receiveth the patient sinner to his mercy by his Death and Passion.

The 43. History.

There dwelt sometime in Rome a mighty Emperor, named Sontatinus, which ordained a Law, that whosoever ravished a virgin should die : and if she were rescued, then he that rescued her, should have her to wife, if him list : and if he would not marry her, then she should be espoused by his appointment. It befall on a day that a Tyrant, named Doncianus, led a Virgin into a

Forrest, and defloured her of her maiden-head. And when he had so done, he would have slain her, and as he was dispoiling her of her cloaths there came riding by the Forrest a gentle Knight, which heard the lamenting of the Damsel, wherefore he rode a great pace into the Forrest to see what it might be. Now when he came, he saw a woman standing all naked, save only her smock to whom the Knight spake: Art thou she, said he, that cryed so lamentably? Then answered the Damsel: Yea, certainly, for this man that standeth here hath ravished me, and defloured me of my maiden-head, and now he would slay me, and therefore he hath dispoiled me of my cloaths: for the love of God, gentle Knight, help me now. Then said the Tyrant: She lieth, for she is my wife, and I have found her in adultery with another man, therefore I will slay her. Then said the Knight: I believe better the woman than thee: for lo, the tokens appear openly in her visage, that thou hast ravished her, therefore will I fight with thee for her deliverance. And immediatly they buckled both together and fought eagerly, till they were both sore wounded. Nevertheless, the Knight obtained the victory, and put the Tyrant to flight.

Then said the knight unto the woman: Lo, I have suffered for thy love many sore wounds, and have saved thee from death, wilt thou therefore promise to be my wife? Thereto I assent, quoth she, with all my heart, and thereupon I plight thee my truth. When they were thus ensured, then said the Knight as followeth.

Here beude is my Castle, go thither, and abide there till I have provided all things needfull for our wedding: for I purpose to make a great feast thereat. By Lord, quoth she, I am ready to fulfill your will. Then went she unto his Castle, whereas she was worthily received: and the Knight went unto his friends for to bid them to the marriage. In the mean whils came Poncianus the Tyrant to the Knights Castle, and prayed her that he might speak with her. Then came she down from the Castle to him, and this Tyrant subtilly flattered her, and said: Gentle love, if it please you to consent to me, I shall give you both silver and gold, and great riches, and I shall be your servant, and ye my Sovereign. When the woman heard this, full lightly she was deceived through his flattering language, and soon granted him to be his wife, and took him to her in the Castle.

Not long after, the Knight came home, and found the Castle gate shut, and knocked thereat; but long it was ere he might have answer. At the last the woman came, and demanded why he knocked at the gate? Then said he to her: O sweet Lady, why hast thou so soon changed thy love? Let me come in. Nay, surely, said she, thou shalt not come here; for I have hers with me my love which I loved before. Remember, quoth the knight, thou gavest me thy truth to be my wife, and how I saved thee from death: and if thou ponder not thy faith, behold my wounds which I have suffered in my body for thy love. And so he unclothed himself

himself naked all save his hosen, that he might shew his wounds openly. But she would not see them, nor speak more with him, but shut fast the gate, and went her way. Now when the Knight saw this, he went to the Judge, and made his complaint to him, praying him to give right wise judgement on the Tyrant and the woman. Then the Judge called them both before him, & when they were come, the Knight said thus: My Lord, I ask the benefit of the Law, which is this: If a man rescue a woman from ravishing, the rescuer shal marry her, if him list; and this woman I delivered from the hands of the Tyrant, therefore I ought to have her to my wife: and furthermore she gave me her faith and truth to marry with me, and thereupon she went to my Castle, and I have been at great cost against our wedding: and therefore, as it seemeth to me, she is my wife by the Law. Then said the Judge to the Tyrant: Thou knowest well that this knight delivered her from thy hand, and for her love hath suffered grievous wounds, and therefore well thou wotest that she is his wife by the Law, if that him list. But after her deliverance with flattering speech thou hast deceived her: therefore I judge thee to be hanged.

Then said the Judge to the woman likewise: O woman, thou knowest how this Knight saved thee from death, and thereupon thou betrothedest him thy faith and troth to be his wife, therefore by two reasons thou art his wife: first, by the Law; and after, by faith and troth. This notwithstanding, thou contentedest afterwards to the Tyrant, & broughtest him into a Knights Castle, and didst shut the gate against the Knight, and wouldst not see his wounds which he suffered for thy love: and therefore I judge thee to be hanged also. And so it was done, both the ravisher, and she that was ravished, were condemned to death: wherefore every man praised the Judge for wise judgement.

The Moral.

This Emperor betokeneth the Father of Heaven, which ordained a Law, that if the soul of man were ravished from God by sin, the savor of the soul should espouse him, if him list. The woman that was ravished, betokeneth the soul of man, which was ravished by the sin of our fore-father *Adam*, and let out of Paradise into the Forrest of this wretched world by the Tyrant *Pontianus*, which betokeneth the Devil: and he not only defiled her by losing the heritage of Heaven, but also he would slay her with everlasting pain. But the soul cryeth with an high voyce, whose cry our Lord Jesus Christ heard. This cry was made when *Adam* cryed after the oyl of mercy, and Patriarchs and Prophets cryed for remedy, saying these words: *O thou the highest in the East, visit thou us, &c.* The Knight betokeneth our Lord Jesus Christ, which came from Heaven, and

and fought with the Tyrant; that is, the Devil, and both they were sore wounded: for our Lord Jesus Christ was wounded in the flesh, and the Devil maimed in his Kingdom: wherefore the woman; that is, the soul, gave her faith and troth unto Christ Jesus, when she became a Christian, saying these words: *I forsake the Devil and all his pride, and believe in God the Father Almighty.* Then ordained our Lord Jesus Christ a marriage between him and her, with the two special Sacraments of Baptism, and the Lords Supper, whereof may be made a strong Castle against the Devil. Also our Lord commanded the soul to keep her still in the Castle of vertue, till he went to provide that was needful; that is, our Lord Jesus Christ ascended to Heaven to prepare for her a dwelling place of everlasting joy, whereas we should dwell after the day of Judgment with our Lord God in honor and glory.

But, alace, in the mean time came the Devil, and beguiled the wretched soul by deadly sin, and so he entered into the Castle of our heart, which should be the Castle of God. The Knight Jesus knocked at the gate of our heart, according to the Scripture: *Lo, I stand at the door and knock, if any man will open, that I may enter.* But where the Devil is, God doth not enter, except the sinner will receive him by Repentance, which seeing our Lord hanging on the Cross, that we may see his bloody wounds which he suffered for us, we sinners should be the rather mindful of his love: For from the crown of his head unto the sole of his feet, was left no whole place: therefore saith the Prophet *Ejai: Behold, and see if any sorrow be like to my sorrow.* Therefore he is a wretched man that will not be converted unto his Lord God, but ly still in deadly sin; wherefore when he is called before the high Judge, he shal be condemned to everlasting death. Therefore study we to open the doors of our hearts by fruitful faith in Almighty God, and then without doubt we shal obtain everlasting life. Unto which bring us our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Body and Soul of Man being made by Gods grace the Temple of the holy Ghost, do give themselves to serve and please God in this life, and to love God and his neighbors according to his Laws: and though the Body by Death suffer mortal affliction for a time, yet by Faith, Hope, and Charity in Jesus Christ, both Body and Soul shall inherit life and joy everlasting.

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The 44. History.

It is read of a certain Roman Emperor, which erecting for himself a goodly Monument or Tomb, as the labourers digged in y^e ground of his palace, they found a coffin of gold bound about wth three hoops, and upon the hoops was ingraven these words: I have spent: I have given: I have kept: I have had: I now have: I have lost: I am punished. That which I had, I spent: That which I gave, I have. When the Emperor saw this, he called together his Nobles and States, and said unto them: O ye Lords, go and consider among your selves, what this inscription meaneth. Unto whom the Nobles shortly after returned this answer, saying: The meaning of this inscription is no otherwile but this: There was a certain Emperor your predecessor, which desired to leave behind him an example to others, that they might follow him in good life and conversation, to wit, I have spent, my life in judging others righteously, and governing my self according to the rule of reason. I have given to my souldiers things necessary, unto the poor maintenance and living, and to every one as to my self, according to their deserts. I have kept, in all my works, righteousness, mercy to them that need it, and to work-men their worthy wages. I have had a liberal and a constant heart to every one which served me: I have given riches in their necessity, and loving favor at all times. I have had, a hand to tame and subdue enemies, to protect and defend friends, and to punish offenders. I have lost, foolishness, the friendship of enemies, and lust, or lasciviousness of the flesh. I am punished, now by death, because I believed not as I ought to have done, in one God eternal. I am punished: I say, alace, because I cannot redeem my self, but by the merits of Christ the Savior of the world. When the Emperor aforesaid heard the meaning of the inscriptions wisely interpreted on this manner, and how long that deceased Emperor had lived, he thereby governed himself, and his subjects more providently, and ended his life in Gods peace, with much honor.

The Moral.

Dear friends, this Emperor may be called every good Christian man or woman, which ought, and is bound to erect and redify a Tomb; that is, his heart prepared unto God, that he may perform his will above all things: and so diggeth in the ground of his heart, by contrition and sorrowful repentance for his sins, that he doth find a golden coffin; that is, a body dead to sin; but his soul garnished with vertues by Gods grace granted to the same, and bound about with three golden hoops, to wit, with Faith, Hope, and Charity. What then was ingraven in the same three hoops: First, *I have spent*: where it may be

beasked, what hast thou spent? The good Christian answereth, My body and soul in the service of God. If any of you bestow his temporal life so, he shal be assured of great reward, even of life everlasting. The second inscription is : *I have kept.* What hast thou kept? The good Christian answereth : A contrite and humble heart : and prepared unto God, to do whatsoever his good pleasure was. The third inscription is : *I have given.* What hast thou given? The good Christian answereth : Love unto God with all my heart, with all my soul, and with all my mind, and love unto my neighbour, according to the Commandment of God. The fourth inscription is : *I have had.* What hast thou had? The good Christian answereth, and saith : Surely, a wretched life, because I was conceived in sin, and born in iniquity, and also was formed of vile and base matter. Fifthly, what is the inscription, *I how have?* The good Christian answereth : My Baptism, and thereby am made the souldier of Christ, by vertues which God gave me in my Baptism, whereas before I was the bond-slave of Satan. Sixthly, what is that inscription, *I have lost?* To this answereth the good Christian : Surely, the favor of God, by mine own deserts : yet all the sins which I have committed against God, I have by repentance corrected and amended, because repentance is one mean : but Christs merits chiefly, and especially cleanseth us from all sin. Seventhly, what is that inscription, *I am punished?* The good Christian answereth, and saith : Because I am afflicted by death, for the offences and sins of my life. Eightly, what is that inscription, *I have spent that which I had?* To this answereth the good Christian, saying : I have bestowed my life time here in the works of mercy, by the grace which I received of my Lord Jesus Christ. Ninthly, what is this inscription : *That which I gave, I have?* Surely, in all my temporal life I gave all my counsel, whole assent, and will, which I had to be the servant of God ; and now it is the good will and pleasure of God, that I shall remain with him in the joys of everlasting life in Heaven. Unto the which Jesus Christ our Savior bring us all. Amen.

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